Volume Forty-eight, Number Three, September 1969

Commentary

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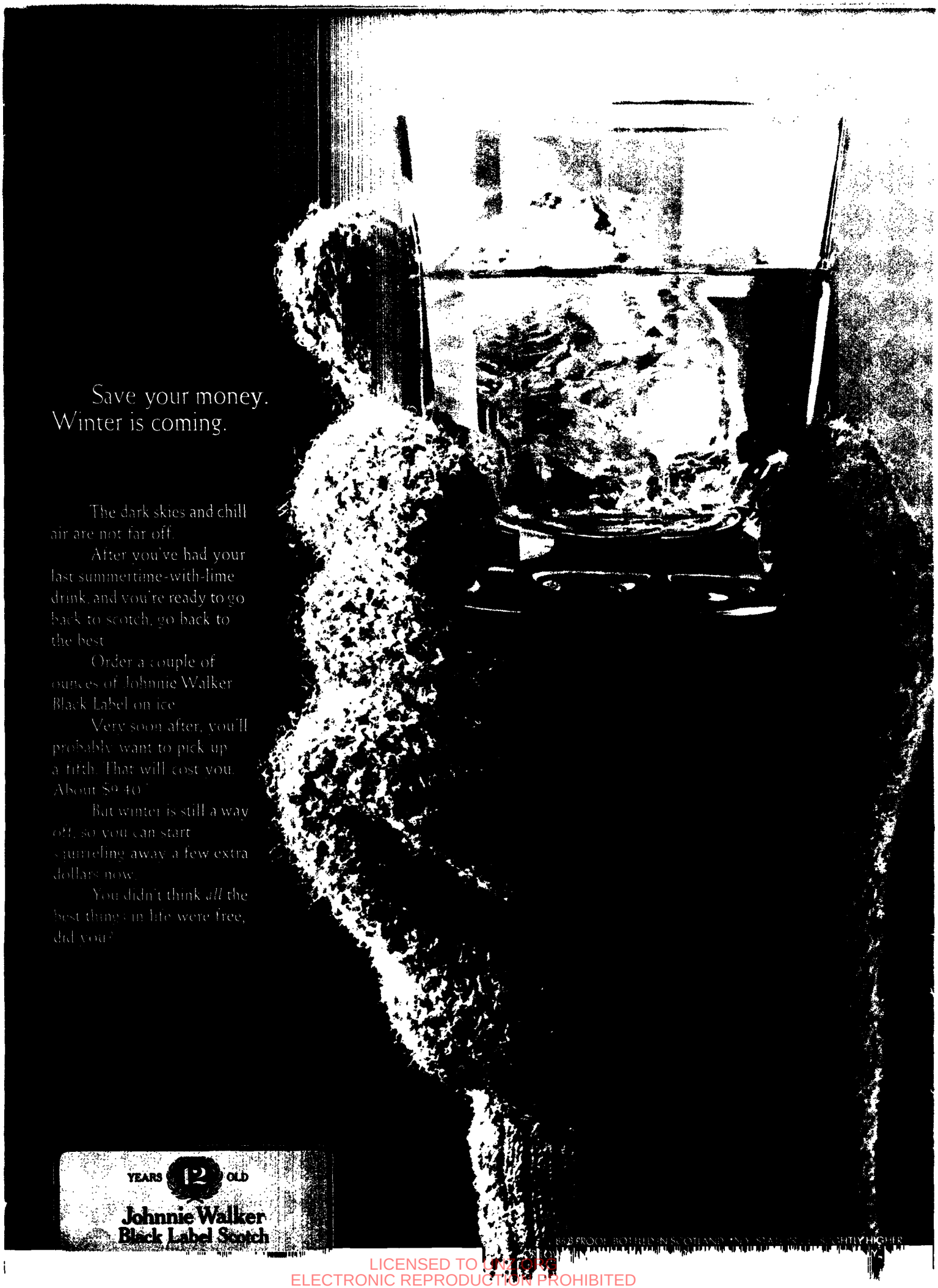

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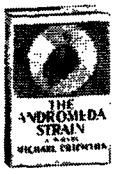

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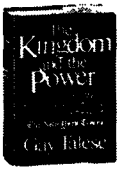

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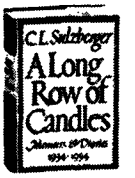

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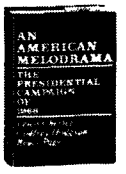

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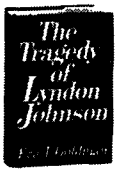

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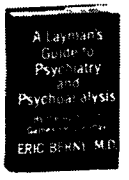

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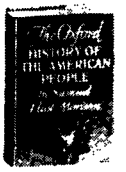

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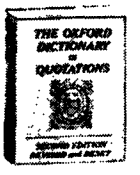

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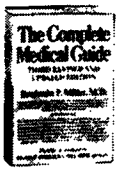

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Commentary

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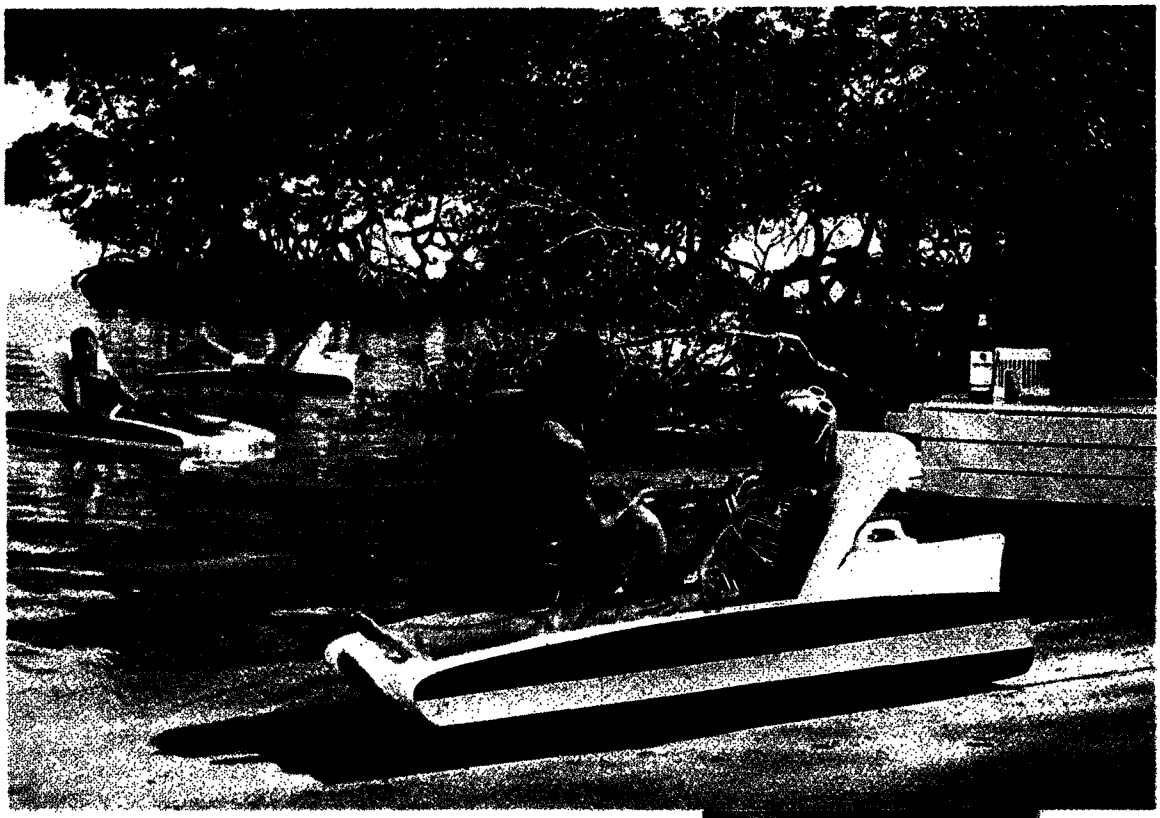

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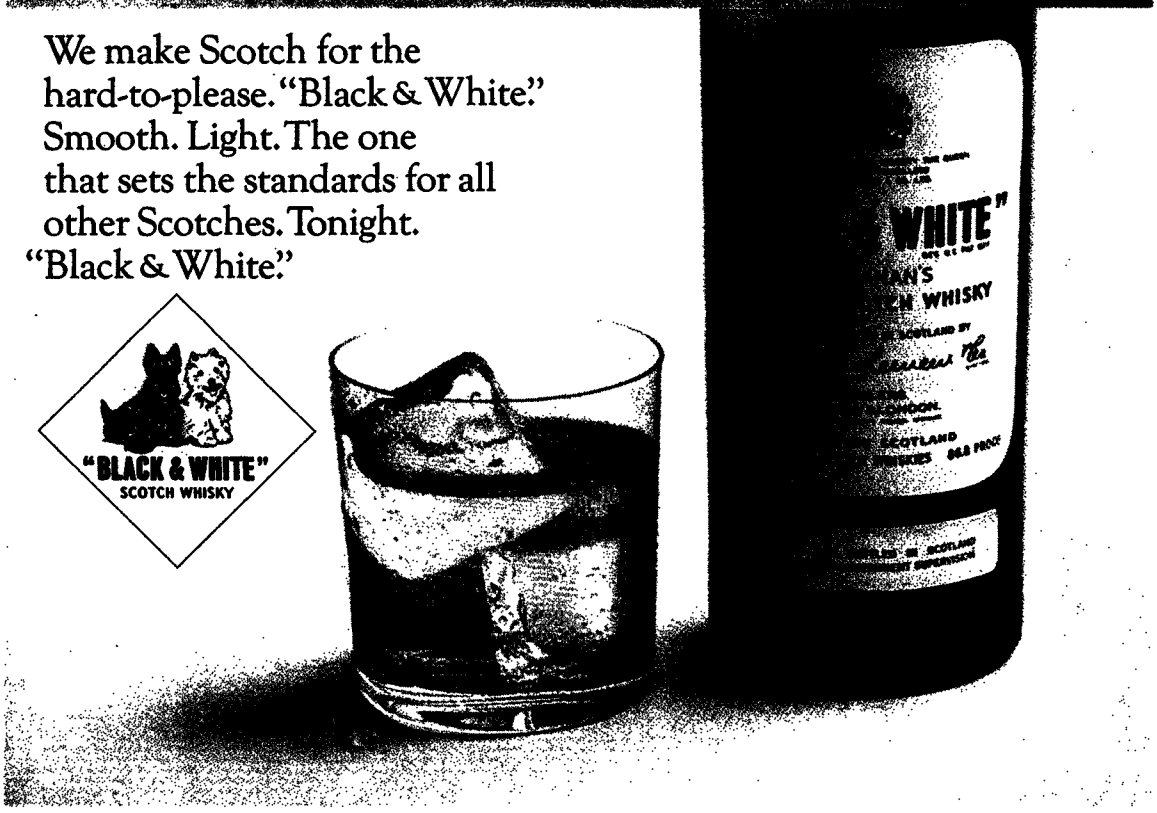

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Letters from Readers

Learning & the Schools

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The sleeper in David K. Cohen's article ["The Price of Community Control," July] is his phrase, "The obvious defect of presuming that schools have an impact on student's achievement, when most evidence on this point tends in the opposite direction." And I have heard David Cohen say, speaking to the Northeast States Boards of Education, that all the data since 1925 indicate little, if any, correlation between what the schools have pretended and what they have performed. In his article he makes nothing of this astounding fact. Yet is it possible that there can be any solution for the problem of how to run the schools when the institution of mass schooling might itself be otiose? You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. How long will it be before the Americans, both affluent and poor, realize that they are deluded about the value of schooling, and spend their money in other ways to help children grow up?

I will answer the question. In the present youth unrest, both affluent and poor, a number of schools will be burned down, in neighborhoods both affluent and poor. Taxpayers will finally revolt against paying for such activities and will cut back on the school funds—this is already happening in the rejection of new bond issues. (I am not exactly advocating any of this, just saying.) There will be many youths on the streets and it will be necessary to provide some non-scholastic way to induct them into society.

Wouldn't it make more sense to go about this before the emergency arises, as I have been urging for many years?

PAUL GOODMAN
North Stratford, New Hampshire

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Certainly Professor David K. Cohen is correct in pointing out the inadequacy of scale which has characterized programs of integration and compensatory education. It is also true that differences in the child's general environment will normally have more effect on his achievement in school than will changes in school itself. I think, however, that this can be overemphasized. If differences in schools are confined to what may be considered the customary range, their effect may indeed be relatively small—though the research data from which the Coleman Report draws its conclusions are simply not adequate to support *any* conclusions. But major changes can produce major differences, for better or for worse. And even smaller changes do make a difference, though usually not a sufficiently striking one to impress those who observe from a distance.

I do not know of any analysis of the results of the More Effective Schools program which has concluded that it has not produced gains in achievement; taken as a whole, the test scores on uniform examinations give fairly conclusive evidence on this point. There have, however, been evaluations which have pointed out that these results were by no means universally achieved, and questions have been raised as to whether the results were worth the expenditure. On the first point, one can only note that no educational technique is infallible; a failure to make proper use of the resources supplied can frustrate the best program. The second question is always a legitimate one; the answer can only be given in terms of the alternatives available. The More Effective Schools program is not *the* answer, but *an* answer; as long as answers do exist, even if they are expensive, a purely negative approach to the role of the schools cannot be justified. Indeed, if "differences in achievement . . . are relatively insensitive to *anything* about schools," why have schools at all?

Professor Cohen is also right in pointing to the political difficulties involved in getting more money for the education of ghetto children. The difficulty is not a new one, and it is not confined to education. The political obstacles to improved ghetto education were also obstacles to the establishment of free schools, to the passage of child labor and compulsory education laws, and to countless other social reforms. They are today obstacles to adequate public housing, to civil rights legislation, to decent provisions for minimum wages and incomes. But they have never been, and are not today, insuperable obstacles. Although pressure

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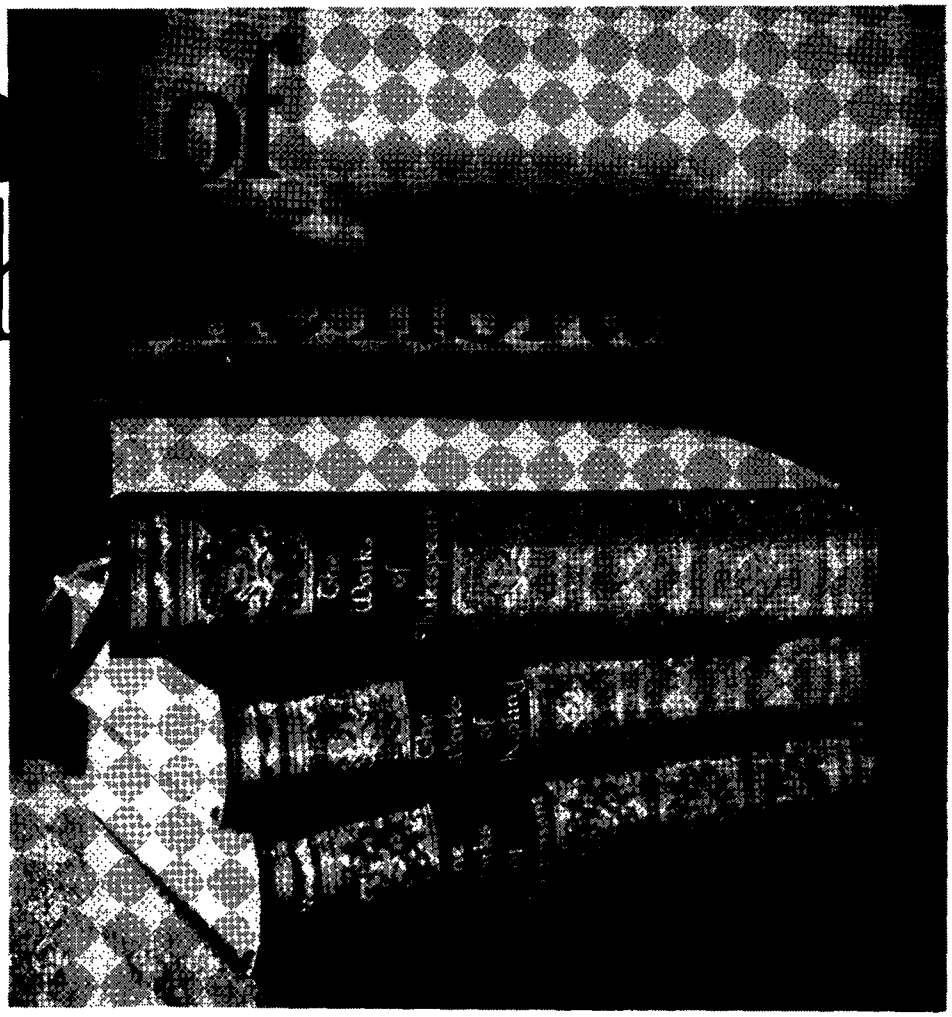

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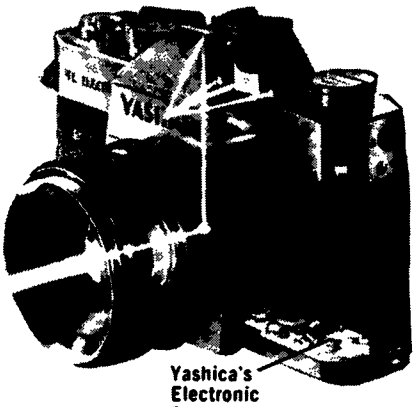

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from the groups benefiting from such legislation has usually been an important factor in securing it, these groups have never been able to win such gains by themselves. Progress has always been possible, and is today possible, only because a large section of the population is susceptible to moral and intellectual arguments going beyond its immediate interests. The operation of such considerations is often discouragingly slow. But any strategy which discounts it is doomed to defeat.

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

David Cohen is guilty of the same error he attributes to those who have dismissed integration and/or compensatory education for having failed to raise the level of educational achievement of pupils in ghetto schools. Cohen correctly points out that since most communities have never attempted to integrate their schools, it cannot be said that integration has failed. Similarly, compensatory education has never really been instituted in the majority of communities. . . . Cohen then turns to the more recent educational concept of community control and, basing his findings on an analysis of data in the Coleman Report and on the recent New York City experience, he dismisses the notion of community control as an approach to educational achievement.

An analysis of the Coleman data, according to Cohen, "fails to reveal any association between the level of parental participation and achievement," but Cohen has neglected to provide us with his definition of "parental participation." It is apparent that to most advocates of community control "parental participation" means something quite different from PTA attendance, the indicator the Coleman Report uses. . . .

Meaningful parental involvement in the ghetto child's education may mean having parent representatives on the local school board who not only have policy-making power but also are able to keep open the lines of communication with the parents whom they represent; it may mean instituting a program using community liaison workers to bridge the gap between school and parent; it may mean the creative *educational* use of paraprofessionals drawn from the community; it may mean merely increased contact between the individual parent and his child's teachers, and lessening of the feeling of alienation between parent and school. Ocean Hill-Brownsville has employed *all* of these strategies, at the direction of parents both in the community at large and on the governing board. It is safe to say that none of these strategies could or would have been attempted had Ocean Hill remained within the existing system. Whatever meaningful participation by ghetto parents may mean, it clearly does *not* mean membership in the PTA. What we need are new strategies of parental involvement, and new definitions and measures of parent participation. Until these are developed, tried, and evaluated, however, parent participation as a mechanism for affecting pupil achievement cannot be dismissed.

One additional point relating to the Coleman Report data: since a large proportion of the big cities did not respond to the survey, one should note that conclusions based on the Coleman data may not be relevant to the larger cities where community control may be most important.

Having dismissed parental participation as unrelated to educational achievement, Cohen next dismisses the notion that eliminating racist teachers would have any impact on achievement, on the ground that achievement differences are solely related to factors having to do with social class. Admittedly, as Alan Campbell, Dean of the Maxwell Graduate School, has pointed out, the bulk of existing research shows that "the single best predictor of student performance is the socioeconomic characteristics of the student's family." But should not the educational system . . . take account of the child who is educationally disadvantaged when he first enters the public school, and make efforts to remedy the situation? Cohen states that the differences in achievement are "of roughly the same magnitude at grade 6 or 9 as they are at the time the children enter school, and are relatively insensitive to variation in *anything* about schools" (italics in original). But the Coleman Report shows that as pupils get to higher grades their deficiencies in achievement become *progressively greater*. The educational system cannot be ruled out

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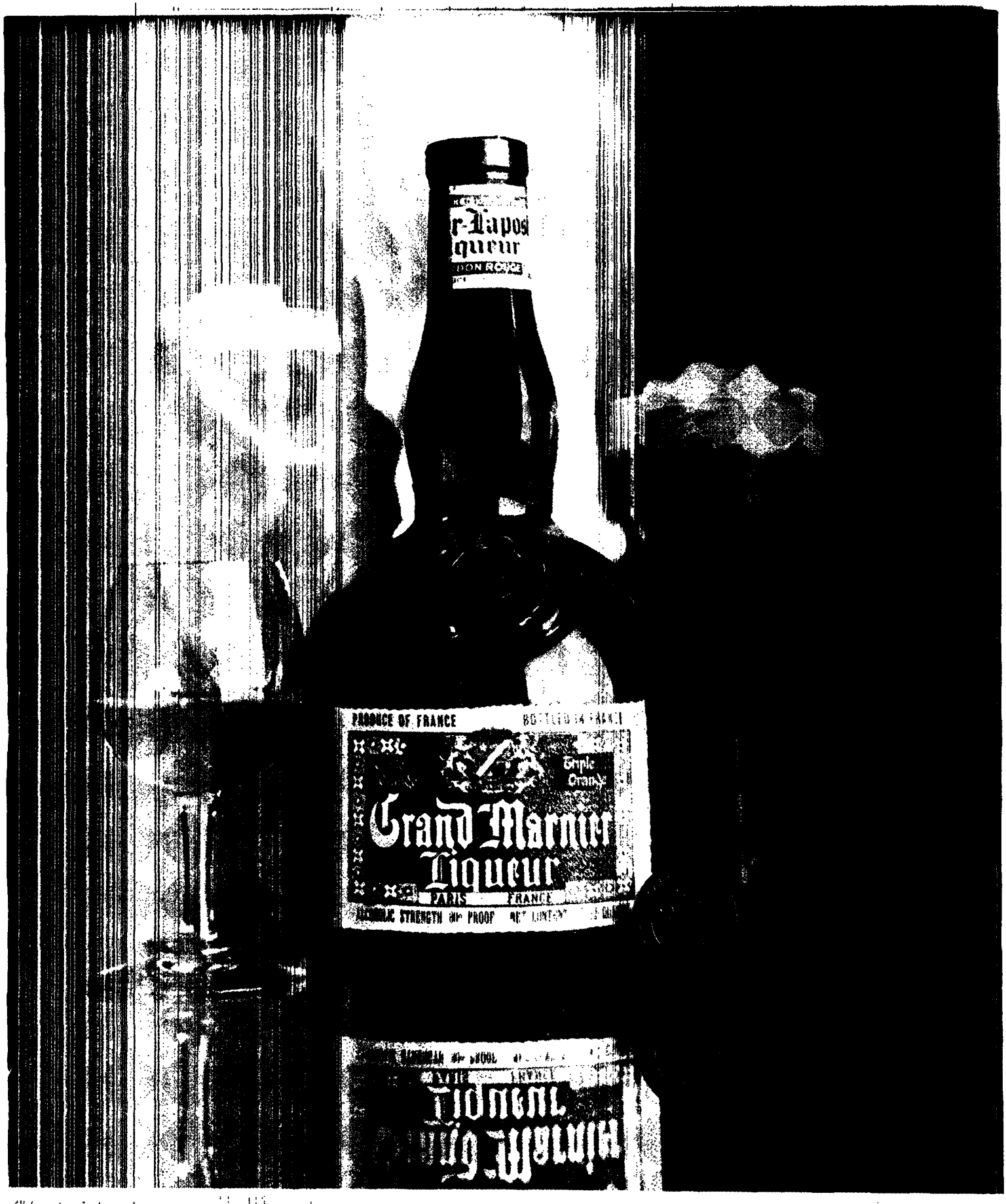

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as at least partly responsible for *widening* the disparities in ability and achievement, and it seems clear that the "racist" attitudes of teachers (or their negative academic expectations of their pupils) are a significant factor in this.

Since Cohen refers repeatedly to the New York experience (which was primarily an exercise in frustration, not community control), I should like to point out that there are indications that in both the I.S. 201 and Ocean Hill-Brownsville experimental districts the *combination* of more meaningful parental involvement and a more concerned school staff—together with whatever impact upon sense-of-self the students may have gained from their identification with black supervisory personnel as well as with their parents' political efficacy—has been effective: student interest has markedly increased, student behavior has improved, vandalism has decreased, and attendance has improved . . . Whether the improvement of the climate for learning and the lessening of the feeling that the school was isolated from the community would have led to improvements in educational performance we will never know: the New York City projects were stopped almost before they got started.

Community control is an as-yet untried attempt to get ghetto schools (which cannot be wished away) to be more responsive to the needs of the children they are supposed to be serving. It may not be *the* answer, but it appears to be a better one than we've had for a long time. Community control may turn out to be as *politically* unattainable as integration and compensatory education were, but it cannot be dismissed as having no *educational* impact until it has been tried.

BETSY LEVIN

The Urban Institute
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Judging from the last section of his article, Professor Cohen's main point seems to be that improving the education of Negro children can best be achieved through raising the socioeconomic status of their parents rather than in trying to better their schooling. At least three comments are in order with respect to this conclusion.

First . . . if it is at all permissible to speak of a goal common to the Negro community in the United States it would be the achievement of equality with the predominant Caucasian community—and this means equal socioeconomic status. Were it seriously believed that this goal could be achieved independently of a person's education, then the problem of the poorer disparate education of Negro children with respect to Caucasian children would greatly recede in importance. The issue of disparate education arose precisely because everyone involved, Negro and Caucasian alike, became convinced that education does play a very significant role in hindering the Negro community from achieving the equality it seeks. . . .

Second, Professor Cohen relies heavily on research data showing that the only factor which seems to have a consistent relation to improved achievement of Negro pupils is the socioeconomic status of their parents; the higher the status of the parents, the greater the achievement of the children as measured by achievement tests. But there is more to these data than reported upon in the article. To the best of my knowledge, which though not encyclopedic is reasonably comprehensive, whenever an attempt has been made to equate the socioeconomic status of Negro and Caucasian children, the achievement scores of the former are always noticeably lower than the achievement scores of the latter. Were one to treat the factor of socioeconomic status in isolation, and assume that it can be equated independently of educational achievement, it necessarily follows from these data—and these are the only ones available—that the achievement gap between Negroes and Caucasians would still remain.

Third, Professor Cohen asserts that his conclusion could be implemented if only society were willing to pay the cost, particularly, though not exclusively, in dollars. It has long been an unquestioned axiom that there are certain things that money cannot buy, and these include some of the things most dear to man. As a social scientist I find it very difficult to see how simply spending money will raise the socioeconomic status of the Negro community to the level of the Caucasian community, especially if the improvement of education is excluded a priori. In fact, no matter how I start out I am al-

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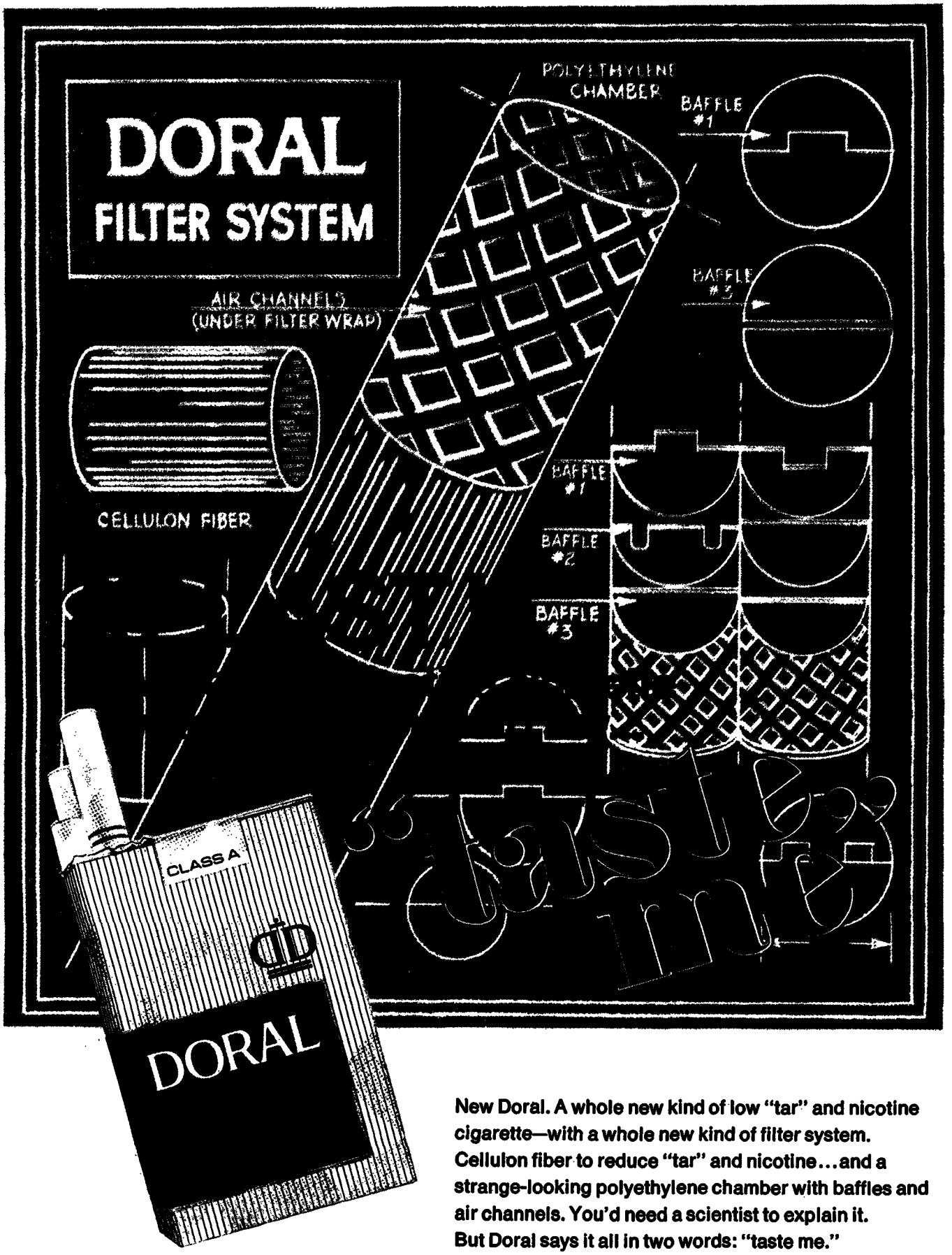

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ways forced back to the conclusion that the only area in which the investment of money bears any promise of significantly raising the socioeconomic status of the Negro community is that of schooling. And we are back to where we started from. Unfortunately, the needed changes in the education of the Negro child cannot, to use a phrase from Professor Cohen's article, "be purchased cheaply with a bit of improved schooling." Nor is the mere investment of money sufficient. The money has to be invested wisely. The failure of our efforts to improve the education of Negro children to date should be attributed more to the unwise usage of the money available than to any other single factor. . . .

NEHEMIAH JORDAN
Institute for Defense Analyses
Arlington, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . As an attorney who has sought the elusive goal of "equal educational opportunity" for black people both in the courts and through the administrative morass of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, I attest to the society's congenital insensitivity when it comes to providing black children with an education sufficient to enable them to meet those standards of scholarship, conduct, and achievement which white society infers will alone overcome its propensity for racial bias.

Dr. Cohen correctly senses the significance but underestimates the difference between the efforts to achieve educational gains for black children through integration or compensatory education and the current demands by blacks for community control of their schools. Viewed as a solution in itself, there is, Dr. Cohen suggests, little in the concept of community control that justifies optimism. But seen as a vehicle through which blacks can utilize their awakened sense of themselves and their growing determination to obtain a share of the nation's bounty by whatever means necessary (which is to say exactly the way whites got their share), then the true validity, appropriateness, and necessity of the community control movement becomes both apparent and irresistible.

The need for white support proved a fatal weakness of both the integration and compensatory-education efforts. Paradoxically, Dr. Cohen finds that neither the presence of white students nor large sums of money are the critical keys to educational achievement. Rather, he feels that social class . . . is the most reliable indicator of a student's achievement potential. But blacks will be reluctant to accept these conclusions. On the one hand, the great mass of black people continues to occupy a fairly low rung on the "social-class" ladder. On the other hand, the standard fails to explain the ability of some individuals to achieve notwithstanding the handicap of lower-class origins. . . .

DERRICK A. BELL, JR.
Western Center on
Law and Poverty
Los Angeles, California

[*Mr. Cohen will reply to these letters, and to additional comments on his article, in October*—ED.]

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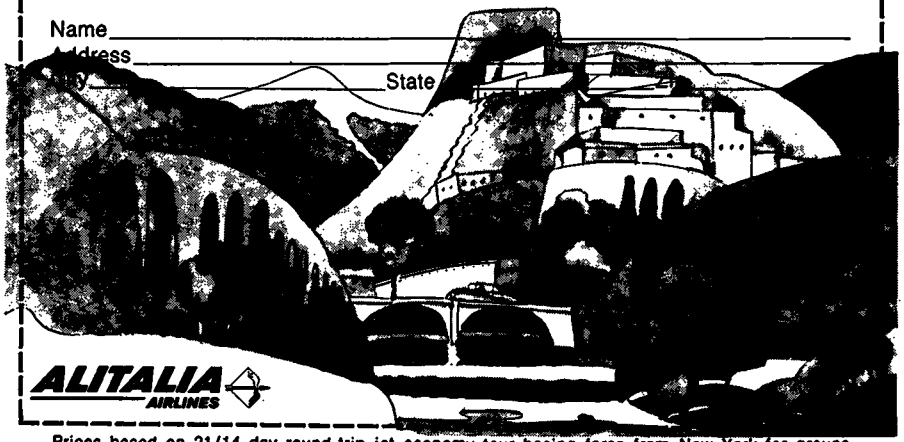

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Jewish Belief

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Marvin Fox's review of *After Auschwitz* and *The Religious Imagination* by Richard L. Rubenstein [Books in Review, July] "prefers to try to understand him." As a student of Rabbi Rubenstein at the University of Pittsburgh, I learned that he is often misquoted and "misunderstood."

Mr. Fox reflects his own particular style of Jewish Orthodox belief. In the COMMENTARY "Symposium on the State of Jewish Belief," published in August 1966, Mr. Fox writes: "To believe because life demands it is not peculiar to religious men." It is apparent from his statements that Fox responds to Judaism with strong Orthodox feelings. This is his own affair. However, I resent his use of language in the review. For example: "Just as Rubenstein refuses to give up the Jewish people, so does he refuse to give up the Torah." And Fox concludes on this ambiguous note: "Against Rubenstein on the one hand, and the spokesman for liberal religion on the other, the *healthy religious instincts* of ordinary men may be the most effective of all arguments" (emphasis added).

What does Rubenstein actually

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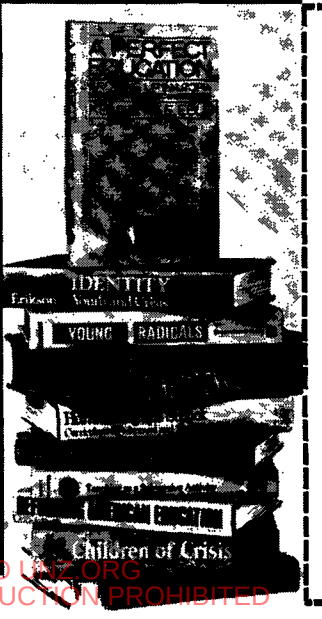

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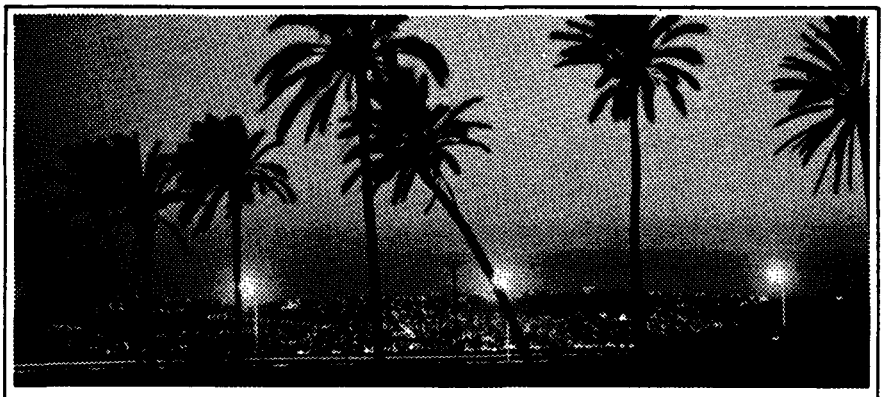

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say about "rejecting God"? Rubenstein rejects God but not the God that Fox describes. In an article entitled "The Nothingness of God," which appeared in the *Christian Century,* February 21, 1968, Rubenstein writes: "The death of the God of history has led me neither to atheism nor to irreligion. It has moved me to see God as the source out of which we come and to which we return."...

When Fox interprets Rubenstein to mean that Auschwitz leads us to "lose hope in man" he really doesn't understand. Just the opposite is true. *After Auschwitz* leads us to the bitter reality that we need each other more than ever before. Interpersonal relationships become extremely important. This includes the religious community. The quest for community is a search for the spontaneous and "natural" which protests against the "hang-ups" of a society viewed as over-organized and over-rationalized, but less than human. The search for "experience" involves a return to the "sacred." In this sense "tradition," "honesty," "love," "openness," and "community," become a way of achieving greater understanding and, hopefully, more effective communication.

HARRY ROSENBLEET
Brith Emeth Synagogue
Cleveland, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I want to express my sincere appreciation for Professor Marvin Fox's review. I value being taken seriously far more than agreement. The dignity, sensitivity, and insight with which Professor Fox discusses the issues I have raised, while maintaining his own theological position, offer a model for honest, probing theological dialogue....

RICHARD L. RUBENSTEIN
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

MR. FOX writes:

Mr. Rosenbleet would do well to reread and ponder Rubenstein's works as well as my review. Just what does he find offensive in the statement that, "Just as Rubenstein refuses to give up the Jewish people, so does he refuse to give up the Torah"? The thrust of his objection seems to be that I do not accept the position which Rubenstein has taken. Granted, but that is neither surprising nor offensive. . . .

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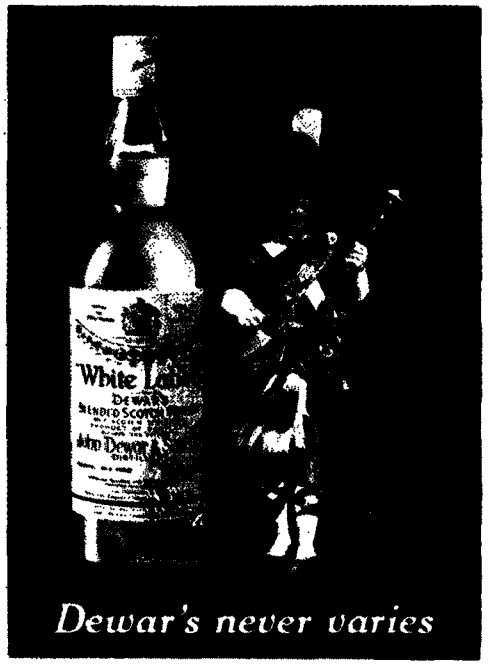

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The Middle East

To the Editor of Commentary:

A most peculiar aspect of the study of international conflicts is that theorists no longer explain these conflicts with reference to the real world but attempt to resolve them instead in a utopian land of "unthinkable" and contradictory scenarios. In his article, "The Alternatives in the Middle East" [May], Nadav Safran manages to avoid entrapment in the Middle Eastern maze simply by going around it, by conjuring up, magician-like, "scenarios" for the solution of the conflict.

Briefly, Safran's remarkably clever and infinitely flexible formula for resolving the entire Middle East imbroglio, with all its disparate elements—Arabs, Israelis; Jews, Palestinians; Nasserism, al Fatah, and Zionism—is "peace without annexations." We understand Safran to mean by "peace without annexations" that resolution of the conflict, or a move toward peace, can begin only when all parties enter into serious negotiations. Yet by "all" parties, Safran in fact means only Egypt and Israel, and he maintains furthermore that negotiation between these two countries is possible solely on the basis of territorial non-annexation and with the patronage (perhaps imposed by force) of the two great powers.

How will this "miracle" occur? Here are the details of Safran's grand design: the boundary line between Egypt and Israel should be redrawn across the middle of northern Sinai and the southern Negev, thereby achieving Egyptian territorial continuity with the Arab world (via Jordan), and safely anchoring the Israelis in Ismailia, thus entitling Israel to free use of the Suez Canal. The Egyptians, in exchange, would have the port of Eilat. This swap would change decisively the nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Safran assures us, for under Nasser, Egypt, the dominant Arab country, has set herself the task of establishing Egyptian hegemony in the Arab East and to do so she must have territorial continuity with the lands of the Arabs. If such territorial continuity were established, Israel's geographic position would no longer constitute a wedge separating Egypt from other Arab countries; thus Egyptian antagonism toward Israel would lose its *raison d'être*, or, at least, the level of the conflict between the two nations would be lowered.

First, let us test the validity of this assumption, then examine its implications, and, finally, turn to "solutions" other than the one proposed by Safran. It requires little stretching of the imagination to recognize that in a Pan-Arab universe, Israel represents a thorn in the side of Arabism, and that under these circumstances either 1) the wedge should be removed by force, i.e., Israel should be annihilated; 2) Israel's physical interference should be circumvented by diplomacy—in other words, some form of alliance should be formed between Israel and Egypt; or 3), as Safran suggests, territorial continuity should be established between Egypt and the Arab countries.

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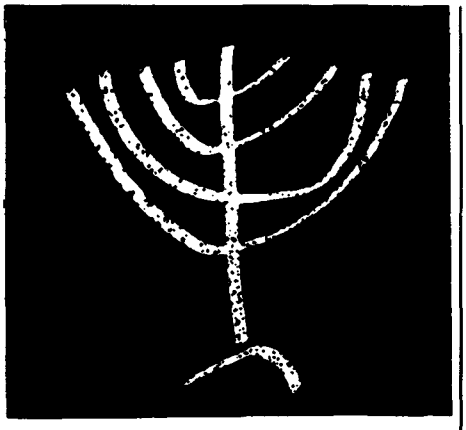

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Neither of the first two alternatives is realizable under present circumstances, and for obvious reasons. The Arabs have proven themselves incapable of destroying Israel and at the same time just as unable to tolerate her existence, much less accommodate it diplomatically. Why then shouldn't Egypt opt for the third solution—territorial division? The answer, from the Egyptian point of view, is that territorial division does not fulfill the basic aim of Pan-Arabism (the aim of Nasser's Egypt, although not necessarily of Egypt), which is not simply geographical but *ideological, political,* and *cultural.* . . . Why should Egyptian-Jordanian territorial continuity *satisfy* or *limit* the cause of political and ideological Pan-Arabism? After all, Israel and Zionism are still considered the main psychological and political cancer by the other Arab nations to whom the problem of Israel's territorial "interruption" is only secondary. And it would be foolish to assume that Israel's existence could be disentangled from the doctrine and purpose of Pan-Arab unity if, even after the Egyptian-Israeli swap proposed by Safran, Israel were still politically and ideologically in the heart of the Arab world and in complete control of Jerusalem.

One might further question Israel's reaction: after all, Israel's most dovish spokesmen still argue that a settlement with Nasser is possible only if he withdraws from his Pan-Arabist position. In fact, it was Nasser's Pan-Arabism which moved Israel to the 1956 Sinai war. Ideological Pan-Arabism under Egyptian hegemony institutionalized and internationalized what was originally an Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel certainly would not agree to dividing the Sinai-Negev desert in order to promote the cause of Pan-Arabism in its Nasserist course. As for the Palestinian Jordanians or Eastern Arabs, their reaction to this plan would be just as predictable; why indeed should they comply with such a solution, unless, of course, we accept that which Safran assumes—that without Egyptian support they amount to very little?

Safran's formula is connected with his interpretation of Egypt's UAR debacle. He assumes that if Egypt had possessed territorial continuity with Syria, she might not have succumbed to Syrian nationalist particularism in 1961 and Syria's withdrawal from the UAR. Yet Safran knows that Nasser was forewarned about Syria's plans and in fact could have called upon the ample troops he had stationed there to quell the rebellion. . . . He also knows that Nasser's disastrous Syrian policy had alienated Egypt's own military and political elites from the UAR adventure, leaving the experiment to the mercy of Egyptian proconsuls and Syrian satraps. Thus, it was not Israel's physical existence that destroyed Egyptian-Syrian ambitions; no amount of territorial continuity with Syria could have aided Nasser, save the use of more brutal power, a possibility he rejected.

As with Syria, so with Jordan. Safran assumes that territorial continuity would have assured Jordan's participation in Nasser's Pan-Arabist hegemony in the 1950's. Yet this too is unlikely. Had she been seriously threatened by Nasser, Jordan would undoubtedly have asked protection from the United States and Saudi Arabia, and here, territorial continuity could have brought Nasser into direct confrontation with American and Saudi interests. Also, one might ask whether the Soviets would have abstained from interfering, in view of their own interests in the Arab heartland.

The major flaw in Safran's argument stems from his effort to impose a 19th-century, Congress-of-Vienna, solution on a political situation of the 20th century. The diplomacy of conflict resolution in the contemporary world is no longer connected with the tracing of maps. Power is no longer interpreted as a function of territory or population, as it was in the 19th century when the addition of territory or population was thought to be an advantage. . . . Today, power depends on the capacity to maintain effective political order and involves the manipulation of ideological and psychological forces rather than territorial or military factors (see the Vietnam venture). Continuity among Arabs cannot be established by carving up the desert, nor can one dissolve the mortal Arab-Israeli conflict by suggesting a solution which in turn would only intensify Arab-Egyptian and Arab-Israeli discord. . . .

In his book, *From War to War,* as in his COMMENTARY article, Safran chooses to overlook the main factor in the Arab-Israeli conflict: the stateless and uproot-

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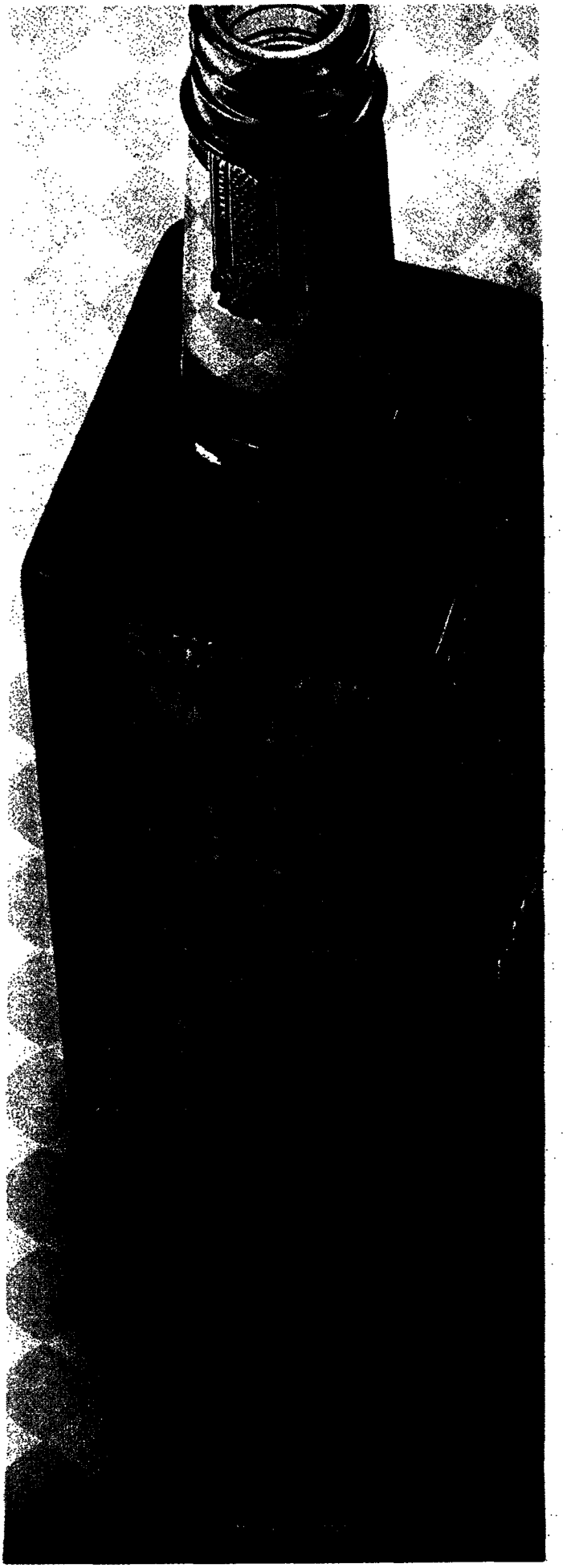

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ed Palestinian Arabs. Instead of offering a supposedly painless "peace *without* annexations," Safran would have come closer to the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict had he concentrated on the question of Palestine.

In effect, there are now two levels to the Arab-Israeli conflict. In the beginning it was—and it still is—mainly a conflict between Zionists and Palestinians, or between Israel and the Palestinian Arabs; after 1954, when Nasser consolidated his power in Egypt, this conflict became enmeshed in the larger struggle to achieve Pan-Arabist Egyptian aims. The 1967 war served to reemphasize the fact that the Arab-Israeli conflict is *essentially* one between Israelis and Palestinians over the geographic and psychological land of Palestine. Indeed, despite the presence of three Arab armies fighting in the name of Pan-Arabism, the only party to gain from the June war, aside from Israel, was the Palestinians. . . .

A true resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict must entail removing it from the Pan-Arabist to the Israeli-Palestinian level. Easing the conflict with Egypt is therefore a secondary consideration, although the possibility of another war between Israel and Egypt remains strong. Israel has nothing to offer Nasser's Pan-Arabist and hegemonial schemes, yet Nasser has not relinquished his dream. In fact he seems to be trying his best to revive it and is now embarked on a policy of *revanche* in which "liberation of the occupied territories" is Egypt's first political move on its road back to Pan-Arabism.

Israel, on the other hand, has plenty to offer the Palestinians, even if at present this is nothing more concrete than a proclamation that the *principle* of the UN Partition Resolution of 1947—that the land of Palestine be divided between Israelis and Palestinians—is once again valid; that Israelis and Palestinians negotiate *new* and *secure* borders (between Israel and Palestine) and come to a tacit understanding that Israel is not opposed to a Palestinian takeover of Jordan (whose Palestinian population is now close to 60 per cent), as long as this is not designed as an anti-Israeli act.

In 1947 it was thought, and the argument retains its force today, that because the political, cultural, religious, and economic factors of the region were not symmetrical, two independent political entities should exist in Palestine. Today, the frontiers of Israel-Palestine could again be drawn, in view of this principle, with due regard to the political and psychological purposes and commitments of both Israelis and Palestinian Arab nationalists. In this way, neither side could maximize its territorial ambitions, nor would the two be confronting each other in a continuous struggle. A mutual nonbelligerence treaty between the States of Israel and Palestine could be signed under international auspices, and diplomatic recognition could follow. Military protection of the Palestinian state should be entrusted to Israel.

This type of conflict resolution relates directly to the psychological and political sources of the Arab-Israeli conflict. And in fact the chances for Zionist and Pales-

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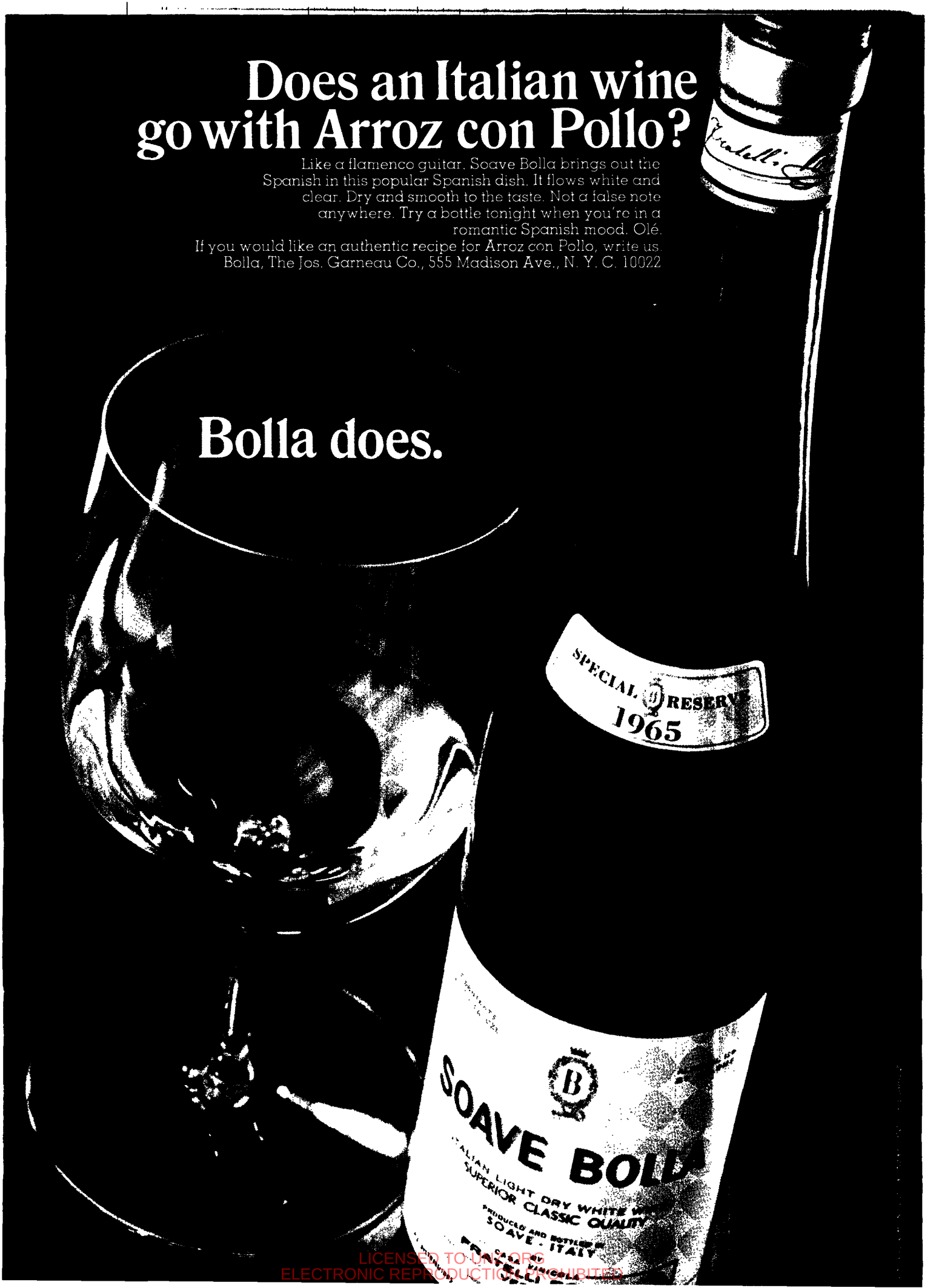

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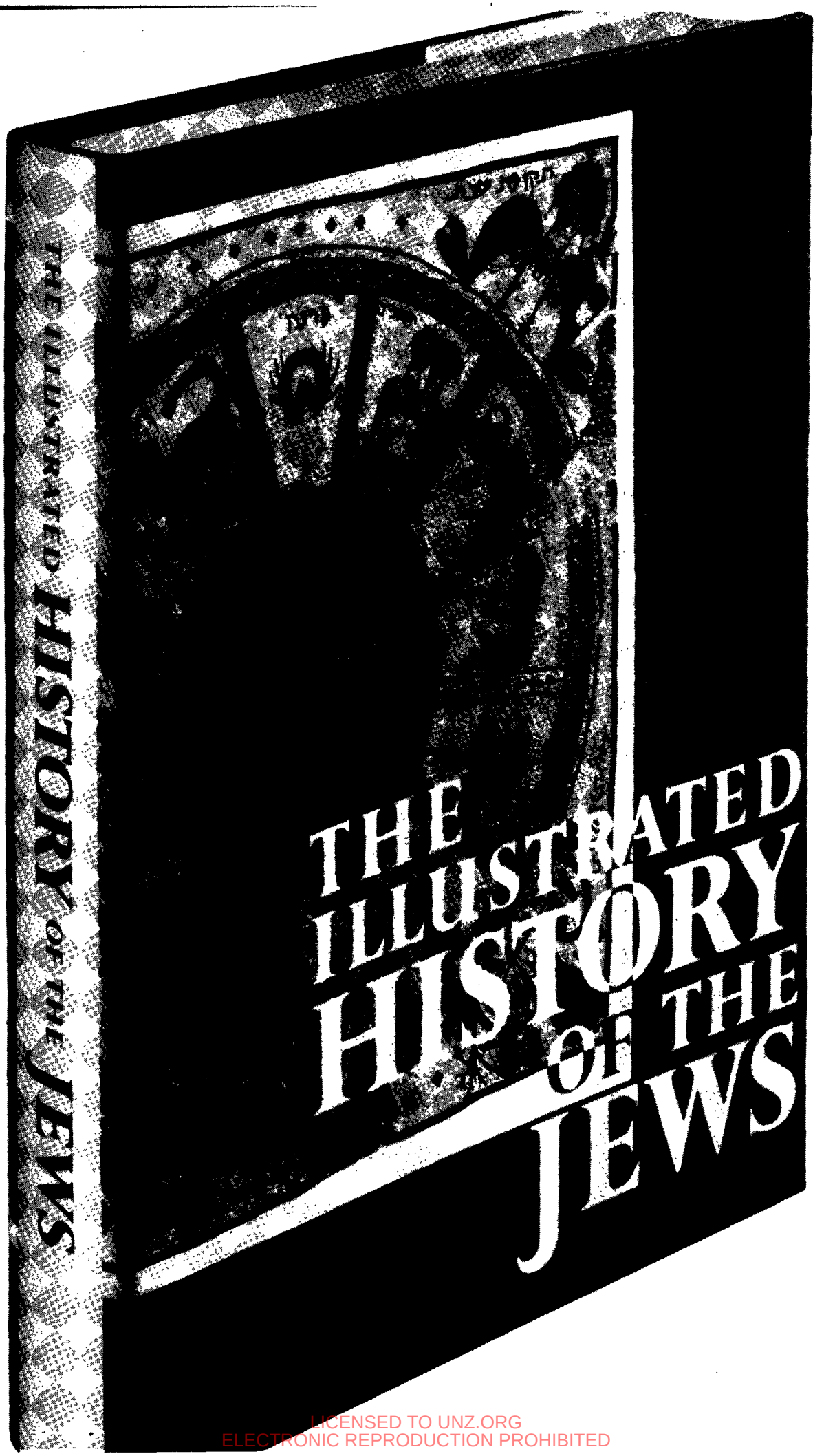

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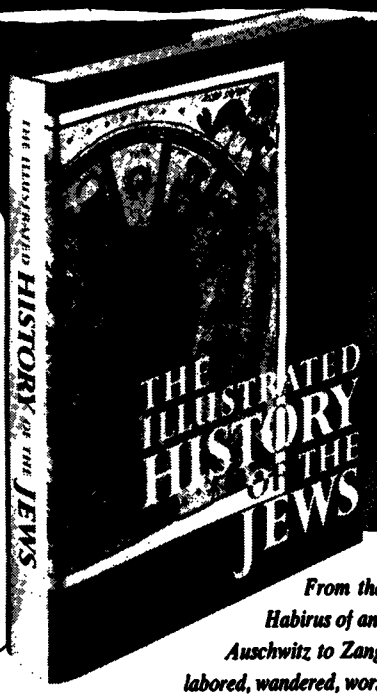

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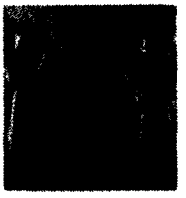

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tinian rapprochement are better now than at any time since 1949. Safran's plan, on the other hand, would only isolate Israel further from the Palestinians and Eastern Arabs since, under "peace without annexations," Israel would become both tacitly and in actuality a partner in Egypt's machinations to dominate the Eastern Arabs. Israel has no right—nor is it to her benefit—to resuscitate Pan-Arab Nasserism; if Nasser will not give up his schemes, then he must pay the price for them—the gradual destruction of his belligerent regime.

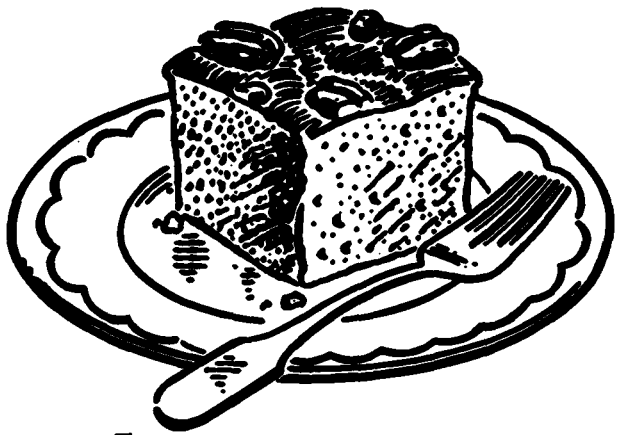
Israel is, however, in a position to give the Palestinians what they have always cherished and sought—a land of their own. A Palestinian solution is closer than any other to the realities of the Middle East situation, and it offers much greater hope for a resolution of the conflict than any solution so far offered by "realistic" political or Middle Eastern "experts."

AMOS PERLMUTTER
Center for International Affairs
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

World history is littered with the rusting remains of "manifest destinies," and the scrap heap has grown quite rapidly in the past thirty years: Japan's Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, Hitler's Thousand Year Reich, Stalin's ephemeral resurrection of Pan-Slavism, Nkrumah's Pan-Africanism, Sukarno's Mahapajit Empire, and, of course, Gamel Nasser's stillborn dream of Pan-Arabism. . . .

It would seem that Professor Safran, who identifies Egypt as the key to a solution of the problems of the Middle East, would have us ignore the lessons of imperial visions. Egyptian animosity toward Israel, Safran believes, is not toward the Jewish State per se, but toward Israel as a geographic wedge barring Nasser from land contact with Jordan and Saudi Arabia, and hence from consummation of his Pan-Arab dreams. Safran suggests that, from the Suez Canal, the Sinai peninsula and the southern Negev be bisected and that the southern half of this area be given to Egypt, while the northern half is left under Israeli control. With an open avenue for Arab conquest, Egypt will lose interest in Israel. Safran does not essay to predict exactly how the other Arab states will respond: presumably, they will be so busy protecting themselves from



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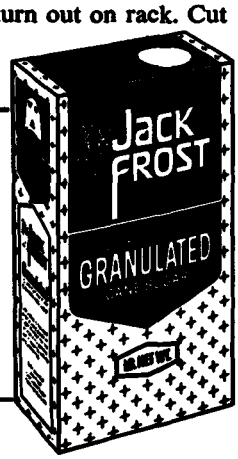

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Egypt that they will have scant time for Israel.

To my mind, this line of thinking is supported neither by moral principles nor by *realpolitik*. There are no grounds for equating Nasserist Pan-Arabism with Arab nationalism. This is not to gainsay Nasser's symbolic importance. Nasser has understood the trauma of the Arab colonial experience; in his autobiography he articulated the national and personal frustrations and inferiority-complexes of the Arabs and suggested a revolutionary program of self-renewal. He successfully seized the Suez Canal, played East off against West, and gave a new sense of self-importance and respect to the Arabs—but this is the extent of his attraction. The fact that Nasser's portrait is prominently displayed at functions throughout Arabdom no more means that every Arab wants to be ruled by Egypt than did the fact that Stalin's picture was displayed in the early 50's in China mean that Chairman Mao's secret passion was to make China a province of the USSR. Egyptian experiences in Syria, Yemen (with both Royalists and Republicans), and Jordan indicate clearly the existence of vigorous local Arab nationalisms which will struggle quite strenuously against attempts at Egyptian hegemony.

The symbols and formulas of "democracy, unity, development, and anti-colonialism" have been polished into a catechism and even a third-rate political machine can repackage them as a marketable commodity. But *caveat emptor*: before you buy, examine the contents. The real import of Professor Safran's plan is simply great-power complicity in the ambitions of the would-be Mussolini of the Middle East. This is not only unprincipled; it promises no political dividends for the powers, although it might temporarily take pressure off Israel by increasing the intensity of Arab internecine strife. If Israel's long-range objective is not fruitful collaboration with the Arab states, but expansion, then this strategy of divide and conquer is useful. But I hope this is not Israel's objective; it is certainly not in her long-range interest. And neither is it in the interest of any of the four powers, each of whom is involved politically and commercially in a number of Arab states. The powers would soon find themselves constrained to take

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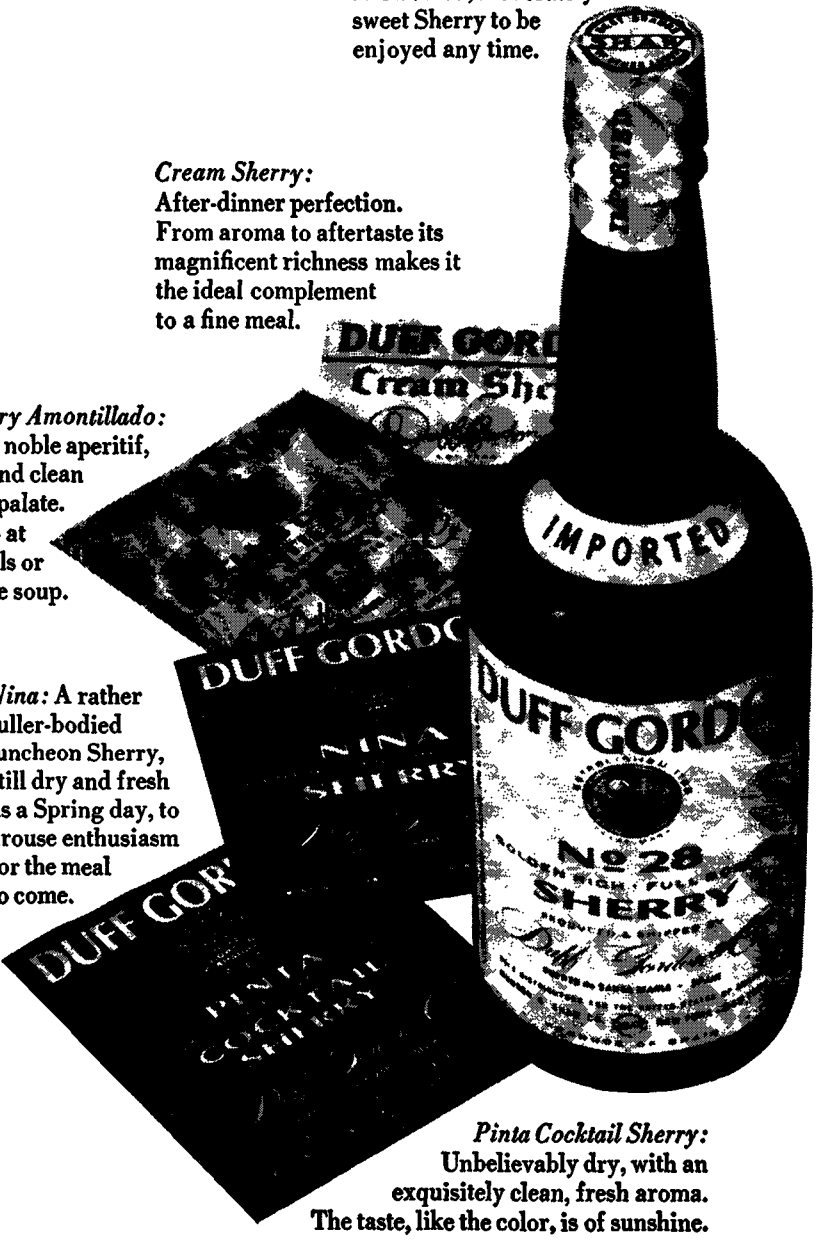

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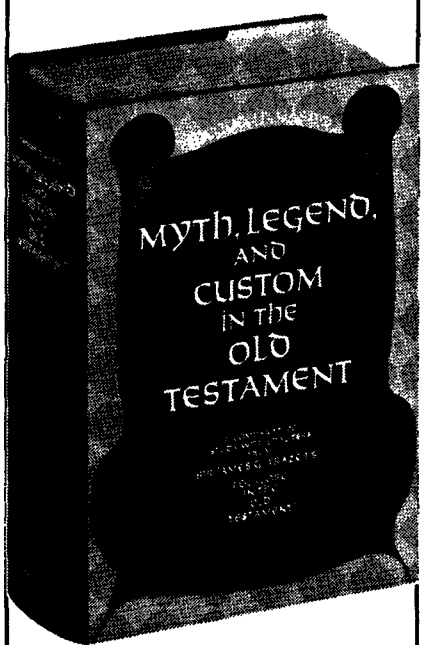

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sides as Nasser threatened their protégés, and they would probably find themselves more implicated and vilified in Arab internecine strife than they have been in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Safran is quite right in pointing up the expansionist dynamic of Egypt, but I think he is quite wrong in viewing it with benevolent neutrality. Because of a presumed cultural superiority, a deteriorating domestic situation, and an elite recruited from the officer caste and politically dependent upon the army's support, Egypt has been war-prone: toward Libya and the Sudan in the late 50's; toward Jordan and Saudi Arabia and in the Yemeni adventure; and, finally, in the rash war of 1967. The real challenge to four-power diplomacy is not how to facilitate Egyptian aggression, but how to contain it.

This is a practicable goal. If Israel announces unilaterally that, without prejudice to her freedom of navigation, she will permit Egypt to dredge and reopen the Suez Canal, and if Western pressure is exerted on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to terminate the monthly allowances being given to Egypt in lieu of Canal revenues, then Egypt will have the most urgent motive for putting the Canal back into operation. With the lapse both of tourism and of the subsidies from the oil sheikdoms, Egypt will be dependent upon the Canal for foreign exchange and will be unlikely to gamble it for artillery duels and commando adventures. The Canal will be opened and the Suez border will be closed.

If this plan succeeded, Israel would, of course, have to forego use of the Canal indefinitely; but its access to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean would be assured by its control of Sharm el Shaikh. Saudi Arabia and Jordan, countries which feel themselves directly threatened by Egyptian ambitions, would acquire Israel as a buffer zone. The Russians might not publicly agree to this arrangement, but they would certainly benefit from it. There is a symmetry in Russian and American involvements in different Arab states; Egyptian ambitions can complicate Russian as well as American diplomacy. If Pan-Arabism is frustrated, Nasser may, as Safran intimates, fall from power, but this is a matter of domestic Egyptian concern. The Soviet Union may have a vested interest in Nasser's incumbency; the United States does not.

Professor Safran thinks that his plan for a Sinai bisection will lay the basis for a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. I don't believe that either his plan or the plan I briefly sketched above will accomplish this. Israel's confrontation with the Arabs is a compound of a number of conflicts: neutralization of Egypt by the retention of Sinai will lower the overt level of violence, but the other conflicts will continue. Central among these are the claims of the Palestinian Arabs. Professor Safran thinks that with some form of settlement without annexations the Arab governments will collaborate in suppressing the Palestine nationalist movement or the movement will topple Hussein and seize Jordan, thereby creating a Palestinian state. Neither of his alternatives is morally acceptable or politically realistic.

Syria, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia have long cast covetous eyes on Jordan. If Hussein falls, it is extremely doubtful that the highly publicized, but extremely small, Palestine Liberation Army will secure control of Jordan. More likely, the neighboring countries will snatch it up or divide it up among themselves. Even Israel might deal itself into the shuffle. In either case, the aspirations of the Palestinians will have no legitimate outlet and will continue as a factor of instability—within the Arab states and on the international level.

The Palestinian Arabs are as much entitled to self-determination as are the Israelis, the Biafrans, or any other group in the world. It is crucial that the four powers reiterate the 1947 UN Resolution on the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and see to it that neither the Israelis nor the Arabs preclude the Palestinians from an opportunity which circumstance and the self-interest of others have denied them. Without a solution to the problem of the Palestinians, the chances for minimum stability in the Middle East, or for a palatable American foreign policy, are poor indeed.

MICHAEL REISMAN
Yale Law School
New Haven, Connecticut

[*Mr. Safran's reply will appear next month*—ED.]

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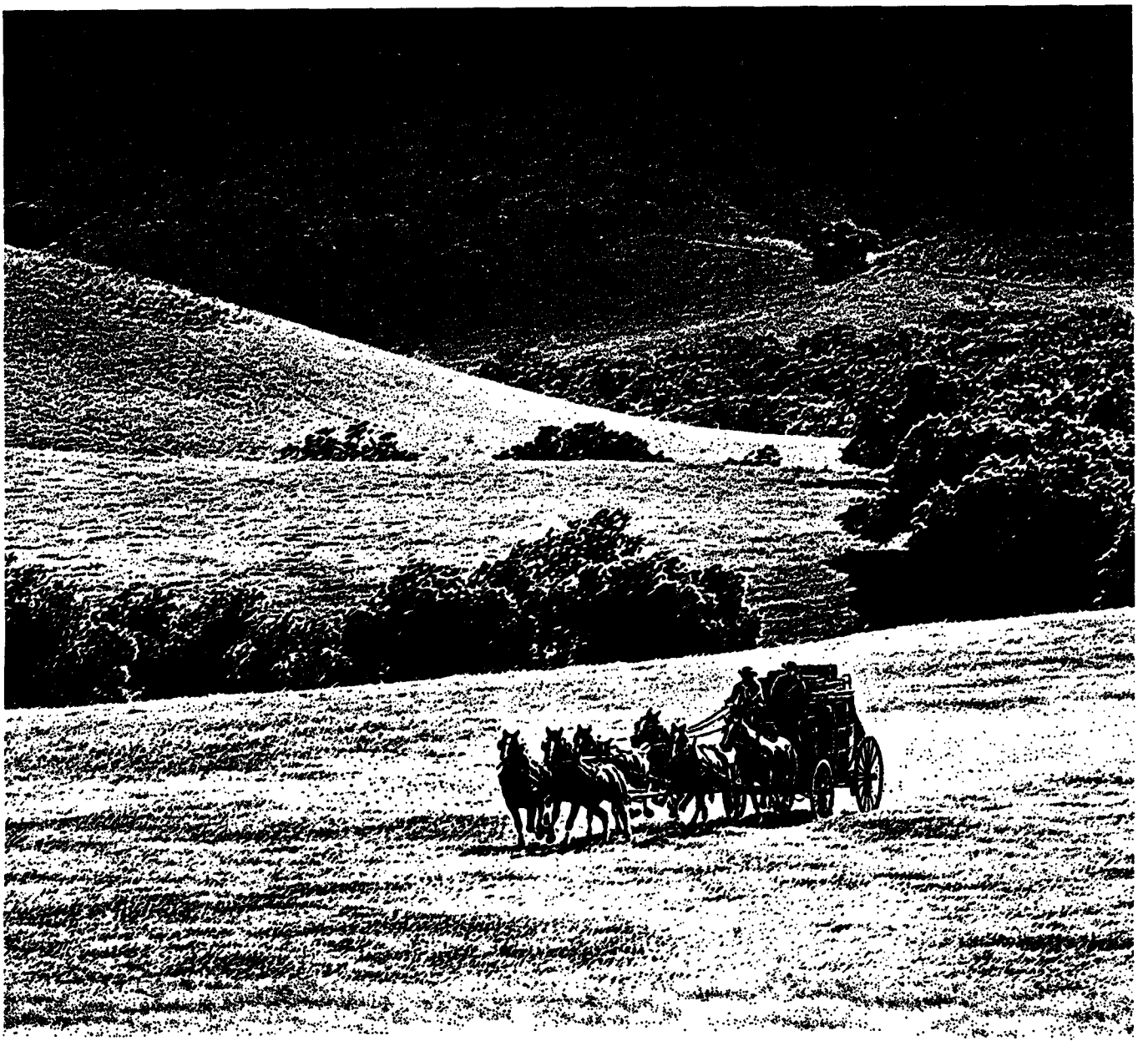

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The Fantasy of Black Nationalism

Theodore Draper

WHATEVER THE 1960's may go down in history for, the resurgence of "black nationalism" will surely be high on, if not at the top of, the list. This resurgence has taken the form of demands for Black Studies or Afro-American programs and departments in our universities, of the Black Panther and other militant movements, and even of a vogue for Afro styles in dress and hairdos. What is not so clear, however, is why black nationalism has taken these forms and where it is heading. There is also need for more clarity about the relationship of black nationalism to the past experience of other ethnic groups in this country, such as the Irish, Italian, and Jewish, as well as about its ties to other nationalist revolutions in the so-called Third World, such as the Algerian, with which the black nationalists like to identify themselves.

The deeper roots of black nationalism may help both blacks and whites to understand and to cope with the peculiar nature of the phenomenon today. For black nationalism in the United States is not new. Its forerunners go back in American history for well over a hundred years. This does not mean that the problems of yesterday and today are altogether alike. Black nationalism today is similar to and yet different from its manifestations in the past; it is related to and yet distinct from all other nationalisms in the world today. This mixture of the old and the new, of similitudes and incongruities, is what makes contemporary American black nationalism so confusing and frustrating to black and white alike. The confusion, if not the frustration, may be lessened by seeing the present-day phenomenon in a larger historical perspective, and for this it is necessary to know something of its past. It is already burdened with a vast literature, some of which I have tried to examine, in order to bring the past and present closer together.

TRADITIONALLY, black nationalism in the United States has taken two predominant forms. The first was "migrationism" or "emigrationism," and it is still with us today—if only in fantasy. Paradoxically—though the paradox takes us at the outset to the heart of the problem—this idea was as much white as black in origin. To see how deeply embedded it was in the white consciousness, two of the greatest Americans, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln, may serve as witnesses. The ambivalence with which they treated the Negro problem of their day has its counterpart in our time.

Jefferson had no sympathy for the institution of slavery. The words, "all men are created equal," were his. He tried to persuade his fellow Virginians that slavery was a "great political and moral evil" and that a large, growing Negro population, whether slave or free, was a "blot in this country." Yet Jefferson and others of his generation were torn between the recognition that slavery was an indefensible human enormity and the conviction that black and white human beings were not made to live together in the same country. He came to suspect that "the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments of both body and mind." On another occasion, he summed up: "Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate, than that these people [Negro slaves] are to be free; nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government." He proposed a plan to the Virginia Assembly for freeing all slaves after they had reached maturity. But the plan called for them, once freed, to leave the country and settle elsewhere. This was the germ of the idea of colonizing the emancipated slaves in a faraway place. If this were not done, Jefferson foresaw a terrible fate: "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that His justice cannot sleep for ever." Despite this, Jefferson freed only a few of his over a hundred slaves because he felt that his financial obligations took precedence.

Jefferson's views were typical of early anti-slavery opinion. In 1790, for example, Ferdinand Fairfax, another eminent Virginian, took up Jefferson's idea and worked it out more concretely. He suggested that Congress should acquire a colony in Africa and provide for the transportation of free blacks who would eventual-

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ly earn their independence.* Such plans, based on Africa, the West Indies, or the then "Western lands," were common at the turn of the century. They showed that anti-slavery sentiment was one thing, living with freed slaves another.

A half-century later, the same dilemma haunted Lincoln. In 1854, he admitted that his "first impulse would be to free all the slaves, and send them to Liberia, to their own native land." To do so, however, presented insuperable practical problems. Yet the Negroes could not be kept in the United States as "underlings." He went on: "What next? Free them, and make them politically and socially our equals? My own feelings will not admit of this, if mine would, we know that those of the great mass of whites will not." As the only way out, Lincoln fell back on "gradual emancipation." Three years later, he saw that even gradual emancipation would raise the problem of racial "amalgamation." To avoid this, he advocated colonization of the Negroes in Africa or elsewhere. "The separation of the races is the only perfect preventive of amalgamation," he maintained. And "such separation, if ever effected at all, must be effected by colonization." As late as August 1862, long after the Civil War had broken out, he told a delegation of free Negroes in the White House that the two races were incompatible. "It is better for us both, therefore, to be separated." Lincoln arranged this meeting to induce American Negroes to emigrate, preferably to Central America.† When his views were publicized, as he had intended, Negro protest meetings were held to condemn them. And only about four months later, Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, which more than anything else doomed emigration projects, including his own, by giving Negroes more hope in America than ever before—and perhaps ever after.

From Jefferson to Lincoln, "colonization" was the white man's favorite solution for the Negro problem. It was no mere case of wishful thinking; it was the basis of the first important Back-to-Africa movement. That it was conceived and organized by whites did not make it less important. In fact, it helps us to understand as much about the white as about the black background of the problem.

II

THE American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color in the United States was founded in the chamber of the House of Representatives in Washington, D.C., in 1816. The president of the American Colonization Society, as it was generally called, was Justice Bushrod Washington, a nephew of the first President. Among its backers were James Madison, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, and many other distinguished figures of the period. Its chief support came from what would be called today the "white power structure."

The scheme itself was the brain-child of a Presbyterian clergyman, the Reverend Robert Finley of Baskingridge, New Jersey. It was reserved for free Negroes only, of whom there were about a quarter of a million by 1820. Finley's motives were "benevolent"—he was appalled by the misery and ignorance of the free Negroes in the North, including those in his own parish. He believed that they were capable of improving their condition, but not in the United States. God, he said, had intended them for Africa, and to Africa they must return—with the help of whites who did not know what to do with them. To Finley, Negroes were always "Africans." He conceived of arranging for their mass migration back to Africa with government support. The country would get a good return on its investment by establishing an African colony on the model of Sierra Leone, the British colony which had also been settled in the late 18th century by liberated slaves. The whole scheme—which Finley was sure came from God—was calculated to appeal to the greatest number and the most varied motives: the free Negroes themselves; missionaries; empire-builders; trading interests; Southern whites who wanted to get rid of those Negroes whom they feared the most without touching their vested interest in slavery; well-meaning Northern whites who saw it as a form of "emancipation" which might ultimately offer a way of buying out the slave system without recourse to force.

A tremendous amount of propaganda and organization went into this effort. In 1819, Congress appropriated $100,000 to establish a government agency in Africa ostensibly to resettle victims of

* The idea of returning blacks to Africa has apparently been traced back to 1714. Those who wish to know more of these proposals may consult H. N. Sherwood, "Early Negro Deportation Projects," the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, March 1916, pp. 484-508. More recently, Professor Winthrop D. Jordan has gone over the same ground, including a detailed survey of Jefferson's views, in *White Over Black: American Attitudes Towards the Negro, 1550-1812* (University of North Carolina Press, 1968), pp. 429-481 (Jefferson) and pp. 542-582 (emancipation and colonization). Staughton Lynd's mordant essay, "Slavery and the Founding Fathers" is vastly illuminating (reprinted in *Black History*, edited by Melvin Drimmer [Doubleday, 1968, pp. 117-31], an excellent collection).

† I do not wish to burden this article, which does not pretend to be anything like a complete historical survey of a vast subject, with an extended bibliography. But it may be helpful for those who wish to look into it more closely to suggest a minimum of further sources. This meeting is treated in Benjamin Quarles, *Lincoln and the Negro* (Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 115-117. In Lincoln's day, the two main colonization projects were located in Haiti and in Chiriqui, then the northernmost province of Panama (Frederic Bancroft, "The Colonization of American Negroes, 1801-1865," in Jacob E. Cooke, *Frederick Bancroft Historian* [University of Oklahoma Press, 1957], pp. 192-258). A good survey of the period may be found in Robert H. Zoellner, "Negro Colonization: The Climate of Opinion Surrounding Lincoln, 1860-65," *Mid-America*, July 1960, pp. 131-50.

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the slave trade. The first shipload of would-be colonists arrived off the coast of Sierra Leone the following year—and were promptly struck down by a mysterious plague. But the Colonization Society persevered and sent a naval officer, whose grandfather had signed the Declaration of Independence, to the African coast to buy land. In December 1821, he succeeded in purchasing Cape Mesurado, three miles wide and thirty-six miles long, for less than $300—though not without placing a pistol at the head of the native king. This tiny colony was named "Liberia" (after the Latin, *liber*, for freeman), and its first settlement was called "Monrovia," in honor of President Monroe. But it was an anomaly, the colony of a private organization, not a U.S. possession. After many ups and downs, the Society decided to get out of the colonization business, and that is how the free Republic of Liberia, by then grown to 43,000 square miles, was born in 1847. The former colonists, who numbered at this time no more than 3,000, became its black ruling class which held down and exploited the native population—even in the form of outright slavery, the ultimate irony—with as much determination as white imperialists elsewhere. The Colonization Society itself started to go downhill in the late 1830's and was virtually finished off by the Civil War. Its most recent historian, Professor Philip J. Staudenraus, summed up its end: "With it perished dreams of an African empire, an all-white America, and a gradual and peaceful obliteration of slavery."*

In effect, the pre-Civil War white Establishment wished to foist African nationality on the American Negro. It did so for the same reason—the incompatibility of blacks and whites—that later Negroes wished to divest themselves of American nationality. Even enlightened whites widely believed before the Civil War that freedom was not a solution to the Negro problem, and that is one reason why it did not become a solution after the Civil War. The roots of the problem go back as much to the Negro freemen in the North as to the Negro slaves in the South. Most white Southerners did not want Negroes as freemen, and most white Northerners did not want freemen as Negroes.

What is more striking about the Colonization Society's effort was the Negro freemen's reaction to it. If they had wanted to renounce American nationality in favor of an African nationality, the society was made to order for them. The society's propagandists and agents labored prodigiously to convince the freemen that it was in their best interest to leave the United States, where they could never hope to obtain dignity and equality. The overwhelming fact is that, in the heyday of slavery, the Negro freemen overwhelmingly rejected the society's blandishments. There were some, such as Lott Cary, ordained a Baptist missionary and appointed the society's agent in Africa, who said: "I wish to go to a country where I shall be estimated by my merits, not by my complexion; and I feel bound to labor for my suffering race." But, to do so, he had to become the paid agent of a white society, and—to add to the symbolism of his role—he came to a sad end in a gunpowder explosion preparing to attack a hostile African tribe.

But for every Lott Cary, there were thousands on the other side. As early as 1791, a society of free Negroes in Philadelphia refused to support the idea of a return to Africa. In 1831, an anti-colonization convention of free Negroes in New York issued an address which stated: "We are content to abide where we are. We do not believe that things will always continue the same." They preferred to put their faith in the fulfillment of the Declaration of Independence: "God hasten that time. This is our home, and this is our country. Beneath its sod lie the bones of our fathers; for it, some of them fought, bled, and died. Here we were born, and here we will die." The figures speak more eloquently than anything else. In 1852 there were about 435,000 free "persons of color" in the United States. By that year, the Colonization Society had succeeded in sending only 7,836 to Africa, of whom almost half went in return for manumission. In fifty years, at a cost of $2,500,000, the society transported only 12,000.

A century and a half ago, then, the issue of Negro nationality arose. Was it American or African? Influential whites insisted that it was African; Negroes, with few exceptions, insisted that it was American. In the end, through a tortuous combination of circumstances and the most mixed of motives, the Negroes prevailed. Of all the ironies in this story, none is more haunting than that a peculiar form of black nationalism was first encouraged by whites. The "Back-to-Africa" movement was in its inception a white man's fantasy for Negroes.

III

BETWEEN white segregationism and black separatism, there has been almost from the beginning a peculiar symbiosis.

The overwhelming majority of Negroes rejected the white "colonization" scheme. But an analogous Negro version made its appearance before the Civil War. As early as 1788, a Negro union of Freeport, Rhode Island, proposed to the Free African Society of Philadelphia a general exodus to Africa on the part of free Negroes. In December 1815, Captain Paul Cuffe, the son of an ex-slave who became a prosperous sea captain, sailed to Sierra Leone with 38 free Negroes in a one-man effort to ameliorate the conditions of American Negroes and, as he thought, bring civilization to the Africans. Cuffe's trip convinced

* *The African Colonization Movement 1816-1865* (Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 249.

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him that nothing much could be done without government help. Some of his passengers later wrote back, exhorting other American Negroes to follow their example: "Though you are free that is not your country. Africa, not America, is your country and your home."* But their call went unheeded. Curiously, for all the white agitation about sending Negroes back to Africa, Cuffe was the only one to do anything about it until the Colonization Society went into the business.

A Negro society was founded in New York in 1851 to encourage emigration to Africa. Its outstanding advocate was Martin R. Delany, whom Lincoln once recommended as "this most extraordinary and intelligent black man." In 1852, Delany published a book in which the earliest "black nationalism" was formulated in unmistakable terms. This book, *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States,* and its even more famous Appendix, entitled "A Project for an Expedition of Adventure, to the Eastern Coast of Africa," is the *locus classicus* of black nationalism.

Delany was one of a remarkable group of Negro spokesmen who emerged before the Civil War. The grandson of a slave, he edited a newspaper in Pittsburgh, studied medicine at Harvard, became a doctor, was one of 75 Negro officers in the Union Army, wrote a novel, ran for the office of lieutenant-governor of South Carolina—and named his daughter "Ethiopia." One sentence in the Appendix of his 1852 book is the most quoted in the work: " We are a nation within a nation—as the Poles in Russia, the Hungarians in Austria; the Welsh, Irish and Scotch in the British dominions." Therefore Delany advocated founding a new Negro nation on the eastern coast of Africa "for settlement of colored adventurers from the United States and elsewhere."

It is not so often noted, however, that Delany had previously written in the body of the book these poignant lines: "We love our country, dearly love her, but she don't [*sic*] love us—she despises us, and bids us begone, driving us from her embrace." And in the Appendix itself, he also referred to the American Negroes as "a *broken people*" and "a Broken Nation." These passages indicate that Delany's nationalism was not of the usual variety. It was based more on unrequited love, on rejection by the whites, than on a self-sustaining, independent need for separate national existence. To put together the broken nation, Delany could not simply advocate that they should go back to the African nation from which they had come. He conceived of a new nation arising in Eastern Africa, made up mainly of Negro "adventurers" from the United States. In fact, he did not care much where they would go, for in the same book he also advised emigration to Central and South America, to Mexico, or to the West Indies.

In 1854, a national convention of representative Negroes met to discuss emigration. It divided into three groups, one backing Delany who now favored the Niger Valley in Africa; a second supporting James M. Whitfield who spoke for Central America; and a third in favor of James T. Holly's idea of emigrating to Haiti. Delany was commissioned to explore the possibilities in Africa where he succeeded in signing treaties with eight African kings who offered American Negroes inducements to settle in their countries. Some American Negroes emigrated to Haiti in 1861, but unfavorable circumstances and the outbreak of the Civil War brought this effort to a halt. All the emigrationist efforts made in the 19th century were pitifully small and hopelessly abortive. Delany himself preferred a career in South Carolina to "adventure" in Africa after the Civil War. He worked for the Freedmen's Bureau and as a customs-house inspector and trial justice in Charleston, South Carolina, despite all that he had written of the country which despised him, bade him begone, and drove him from her embraces. †

AFTER the miscarriage of Reconstruction, migrationist sentiment flared up again. An African Emigration Association, established in 1881, aimed at a "United States in Africa, modeled after this government, and under the protecting care of the same." One unreconstructed Southern politician, Senator John Tyler Morgan of Alabama, advised Negroes to emigrate on the ground that there was no future of social equality for them in the United States. The Negro community as a whole rejected his advice. "All this native land talk is nonsense," said Frederick Douglass, the foremost Negro Abolitionist, in 1894. "The native land of the American Negro is America." But one who agreed with Senator Morgan was Bishop H. M. Turner who called on two or three million American Negroes to "return to the land of our ancestors, and establish our own nation, civilization, laws, customs, style of manufacture." Not two or three hundred followed his counsel.

Delany, Bishop Turner, Edward W. Blyden, H. Ford Douglass, Reverend Henry Highland Garnet, and a few others have become the heroes and prophets of today's black nationalism. Even Frederick Douglass is being denigrated as a kind of Uncle Tom because he opposed this trend. In their own time, however, few Negroes took De-

* Henry Noble Sherwood, "Paul Cuffe," *The Journal of Negro History,* April 1923, p. 218.

† The emigrationists active in this period have been studied by Howard H. Bell, "Negro Nationalism: A Factor in Emigration Projects, 1858-1861," the *Journal of Negro History,* January 1962, pp. 42-53. A pioneer work by Carter G. Woodson, *A Century of Negro Migration* (The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1918), is still most useful.

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lany or Turner seriously and even fewer acted on their advice. The historical problem is not merely why they advocated going back to Africa but why they were not listened to.*

Colonization and emigrationism were two sides of the same coin. If one was a white fantasy, the other was no less a fantasy because it was black.

IV

YET THIS fantasy is so deeply rooted that it continued—and continues—to take numerous, extremely variegated forms.

A subtle, intellectual expression was represented by one of the truly outstanding figures of the past century, Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois. In 1897, he first projected the idea that American Negroes were Americans in a limited way—by birth, citizenship, political ideals, language, and religion. Whatever was unique in the American Negroes, he contended, was tied up with the entire Negro world outside America—with "Pan-Negroism." In effect, Du Bois joined together the two strains that had been struggling for supremacy among American Negroes. They were, he maintained, neither American nor African but something of both. Du Bois thus opened himself to attack from both camps—from those who utterly rejected their African past and those who bitterly rejected their American present. But Du Bois never succeeded in reconciling the two forces; he held them in an extremely uneasy and unstable equilibrium which he himself could not always control.

DU BOIS'S "double-consciousness" of being both an American and a Negro led him a quarter of a century later to the espousal of a Pan-African movement in which he called on American Negroes to play a leading role. Du Bois devoted about a decade of his long and prolific career to this work, mainly in the form of Pan-African Congresses, of which four were held between 1919 and 1927, and a fifth and last in 1945. Pan-Africanism for Du Bois did not mean Negro separation from the United States; rather it implied American Negro leadership of the cause and interests of Negroes throughout the world, especially in Africa, which was still largely dominated by white imperialisms. In his voluminous works, Dr. Du Bois reflected so many strains of American Negro thinking and feeling that it is not easy to grasp him whole. He is usually classified as a "cultural nationalist," though he was sometimes more and sometimes less. In his autobiography, *Dusk of Dawn*, he suggested a number of different paths that American Negroes might follow, not because he thought they were necessarily the best but because white prejudice gave them no choice. The ultimate object of his "plan of action," he wrote, was "full Negro rights and Negro equality in America." But if they proved to be unattainable, he foresaw the possibility of "eventual emigration" from the United States by "some considerable part" of the Negro population. Elsewhere in the book he was even more pessimistic and speculated that the Negro might be "pushed out of his American fatherland" as Germany was then expelling the Jews. And he also came out in support of Negro "self-segregation" in the United States.

One side of Du Bois's thought clearly contained traces of the migrationist tradition. He preferred to have the best of both possible worlds but, in his most despondent moments, he felt that it might be necessary to settle for one—the African. He himself spent the last years of his life in Ghana. For all his vast gifts, however, Du Bois succeeded in converting few American Negroes. As he later admitted, "American Negroes were not interested" in his Pan-Africanism.† If he wanted American Negroes to lead the Negro world, he was never able to lead American Negroes. Yet by inspiring future leaders of African nationalism, such as Kwame Nkrumah and Jomo Kenyatta, he was ultimately able to influence a resurgent American black nationalism through them.

V

IF ONE looked only at Dr. Du Bois's frustration in the early 1920's, one might have imagined that Africa held out little appeal to the American Negroes' interests or imagination. Nothing at that very time could have been farther from the truth.

In 1914, Marcus Garvey, a West Indian Negro of far more modest intellectual equipment or attainment than Dr. Du Bois, set up a Universal Negro Improvement Association in his native Jamaica. His first manifesto called on all people of Negro or African parentage to establish "Universal Confraternity." He met with hostility or indifference. Two years later he came to New York, revived the UNIA, and after a slow start, "stirred the imagination of the Negro masses as no Negro ever had," so James Weldon Johnson testified. And he stirred their imagination with a peculiar ver-

* Howard Brotz has edited an excellent anthology of Delany, Blyden, Garnet, as well as Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey and others, *Negro Social and Political Thought 1830-1920* (Basic Books, 1966). For their influence on African nationalism, see George Shepperson, "Notes on Negro American Influences on the Emergence of African Nationalism," *Journal of African History*, 1, 2 (1960), pp. 299-312 (reprinted in *Black History*, op. cit., pp. 493-512). Blyden, Delaney, and others are also treated in an essay by Hollis R. Lynch, "Pan-Negro Nationalism in the New World, Before 1862," reprinted in another excellent collection, *The Making of Black America*, edited by August Meier and Elliott Rudwick (Atheneum, 1969), vol. 1, pp. 42-65.

† *What the Negro Wants* (University of North Carolina Press, 1944), p. 60.

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sion of Pan-African nationalism at the very time Du Bois's Pan-Africanism could hardly get off the ground. Indeed, Garvey and Du Bois were vicious rivals and enemies. One of the least offensive things Garvey said about Du Bois was that he belonged to "the greatest enemies the black people have in the world." And Du Bois, in almost the same language, paid him back: "Marcus Garvey is, without doubt, the most dangerous enemy of the Negro race in America and the world. He is either a lunatic or a traitor."

Garveyism came closest to expressing itself in terms of traditional nationalism. It made "nationhood" the highest ideal of all peoples. "The Negro needs a nation and a country of his own," Garvey expounded. Or again: "Nationhood is the strongest security of any people and it is for that the Universal Negro Improvement Association strives at this time." The trouble was that Garvey's proposed Negro nation was in Africa, whereas his constituency was in the United States. Garvey's "African Republic" was set up in New York, not on African soil. There was not a single African in what amounted to his African government-in-exile. This imperial travesty was headed by "His Highness, the Potentate," followed by "His Excellency, the Provisional President of Africa," and nineteen other grand dignitaries. They were surrounded by a nobility which included the Knights of the Nile, Dukes of Nigeria and Uganda, Distinguished Service Order of Ethiopia, all in dazzling, multicolored uniforms. The military reconquest of Africa was intimated by a Universal African Legion, Universal Black Cross Nurses, Universal African Motor Corps, and Black Eagle Flying Corps. Garvey's nationalism had all the trappings and appurtenances of nationhood, except that the nation it had in mind was somewhere else, and had nothing to say about Garvey's plans for it.

RACISM permeated Garvey's nationalism. He was obsessed with the need for "purity of race"—any race. "I believe," he said, "in a pure black race, just as how all self-respecting whites believe in a pure white race, as far as that can be." The Garveyite gospel simply inverted the prejudices of white supremacy. Everything superior was black, everything inferior white. He founded an African Orthodox Church in which God was black, angels were black, and Satan was white. The church held meetings to deify the "Black Man of Sorrows" and canonize the "Black Virgin Mary." This infatuation with racial purity was partly Garvey's undoing. Himself black, Garvey wanted his power wholly black, to such an extent that he distinguished fundamentally not only between black and white but between black and mulatto. He tried to transplant to the United States the West Indian caste distinction between blacks and mulattoes, thereby alienating many American mulattoes. Garvey also drove the logic of "racial purity" to its most extreme by saying kind things about the Ku Klux Klan because it was openly racist as much as he was. The only whites whom he respected were those who loved Negroes as little as he loved whites. White supremacy leaders spoke at UNIA meetings, and Garvey himself once conferred with Edward Young Clarke, Imperial Giant of the Klan. Many Negroes were scandalized, but Garvey insisted: "I regard the Klan, the Anglo-Saxon Clubs and White American societies, as far as the Negro is concerned, as better friends of the race than all other groups of hypocritical whites put together." Garvey recognized that he and the Klan were implicitly allied, their beliefs based on a common principle—there was no place for Negroes in the United States. The only thing that mattered to him was getting the Negroes out of the United States back to where he thought they belonged—Africa. If the Ku Klux Klan helped to achieve that end by persecuting Negroes and teaching them they were not wanted, he was not against the Klan and even saw merit in it. Rarely has there been such a case of extremes meeting, or better perhaps, feeding on each other.

Garvey's Africanism also helps to explain another paradox—his admiration for Booker T. Washington. Reading Washington's *Up From Slavery* had first inspired Garvey to become a "race leader," and thereafter he never mentioned Washington without paying tribute to his farsightedness, alone among American Negro leaders. Yet, for Du Bois's generation, Washington represented abject capitulation to white rule. In his famous—or infamous—address at the Atlanta Exposition in 1895, which made him the outstanding Negro spokesman for the next two decades, Washington had advised his people to strive for "material prosperity," not "social equality." "It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top," he said—and the bottom for him meant work, education, professional skills. The rest, he taught, would come in due time. Meanwhile, he accepted white political domination and social ostracism. One might imagine that nothing would have been more antipathetic to Garvey's racial pride than Washington's seemingly limitless patience. On the contrary, Garvey saw in Washington an exception to other Negro movements which, Garvey complained, "sought to teach the Negro to aspire to social equality with the whites." Washington was not so much an exception to the rule as Garvey wanted to believe. Washington's doctrine of work instead of politics was a temporary expedient; he was not so much opposed to social equality and political privileges as he was convinced that they would come when the Negroes were ready for them. What Garvey read into Washington's message was the willingness to stay out of the white man's world, not to challenge him on his own ground. Garvey wanted

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to make a deal with white America in return for black Africa. He was ready, he said, to "cede to the white man the right of doing as he pleases in his own country, and that is why we believe in not making any trouble when he says that 'America is a white man's country,' because in the same breath and with the same determination we are going to make Africa a black man's country." For Garvey, black nationalism in Africa implied white supremacy in the United States—and this equation was the reason for his peculiar affinity with both the Ku Klux Klan and Booker T. Washington.

Garveyism was also a parody of "black capitalism." The UNIA went into business on a grand scale—groceries, laundries, restaurants, hotels, printing plants, above all, the Black Star Line of ships. Logically, these business enterprises should have made Garvey conscious of the fact that he was operating within the white U.S. economy, and not yet in his own domain where he could do as he pleased. But Garvey's business practices were also slightly fantastic. The Black Star Lines' treasurer knew nothing about bookkeeping; Garvey hired and fired one executive after another on charges of dishonesty; he himself received money from stocks of which he did not bother to keep a record. It did not take long for legal and economic reality to catch up with Garvey. His movement reached its peak in 1921. In 1923 the federal government, urged by his Negro enemies, tried Garvey on a charge of using the mails to defraud in the sale of stock for his steamship line. He was convicted and sentenced to a five-year term which he began to serve in 1925. Two years later, he was pardoned and deported back to Jamaica as an undesirable alien. Without him, his movement quickly shriveled. He died in London in 1940 at the age of fifty-three, broken and pathetic.

In his classic work, *An American Dilemma,* Gunnar Myrdal drew the lesson that Garveyism showed that "a Negro movement in America is doomed to ultimate dissolution and collapse if it cannot gain white support." This, he continued, was the "real dilemma," for "white support will be denied to emotional Negro chauvinism when it takes organizational and political form." The eminent historian, John Hope Franklin, concluded that Garvey's "'Negro Zionism' was doomed to failure." He tried to explain why: "Regardless of how dissatisfied Negroes were with conditions in the United States they were unwilling in the 20's, as their forebears had been a century earlier, to undertake the uncertain task of redeeming Africa. The widespread interest in Garvey's program was more a protest against the anti-Negro reaction of the postwar period than an approbation of the fantastic schemes of the Negro leader." A recent writer, Harold Cruse, has expressed the view that "this predominantly West Indian movement was not really attuned to the internal peculiarities of the Negro-white situation in the United States. They saw the solution to the problem outside the system—namely, in Africa. But not a single Garveyite settlement, either in America or the West Indies, exists in Africa today."

There was something both real and fantastic about Garvey's movement. That it was the first and greatest Negro mass movement in American history shows that it responded to real hopes and resentments. For all his intended appeal to Negroes everywhere, Garvey, not an American, was eminently successful only in America and could reproduce his success nowhere else. If his flame burned more brightly than that of any other Negro leader, it was also snuffed out more quickly. For Garveyism was an authentic American Negro movement in the guise of an African fantasy. What was authentic about it made it live, however briefly; what was fantastic about it made it die out, virtually without a struggle. Despite all the propaganda about going back to Africa, no one went. Garvey himself never even visited Africa. He sent emissaries to Liberia to investigate the possibilities of colonizing it with American Negroes, but these feelers came to nothing. By 1924, relations between Garvey's movement and Liberia were so strained that Garveyites were forbidden to land in the country. Garvey appealed mainly to recently uprooted Negro migrants from the Southern states and recently arrived immigrants from the West Indies who were stirred emotionally by an exotic incarnation of nationalism and migrationism, even a spurious nationalism and an imaginary migrationism. But these ideas had little or nothing to do with their immediate lives, with their own time and place. More than anything else, this was Garvey's undoing.*

VI

THUS FAR we have been pursuing the first of the two predominant forms which black nationalism has traditionally assumed—external emigrationism. The other major form may be called "internal statism." It differs from the first in that it seeks to establish an independent Negro state within the confines of what is now the United States.

This scheme was also an early white idea. One of its first proponents was Anthony Benezet, a Philadelphia Huguenot, a pioneer of the anti-slavery movement before and after the American Revolution. In a tract called *Tyrannical Libertymen: a Discourse upon Negro Slavery in the United States,* published in Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1795, he recommended the colonization of emancipated blacks in the public lands in the

* The standard biography of Garvey is Edmund Davis Cronon's *Black Moses* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1955). His writings were compiled by his second wife, Amy Jacques Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey* (Frank Cass & Co., London, 1967, two volumes in one).

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Northwest Territory, then largely settled by Indians. This plan resembled the other early colonization schemes, except that it envisaged a black colony on the American mainland. Thomas Jefferson also wrestled with the problem: In a letter to James Monroe in 1801, he wondered whether it might not be advisable for the state of Virginia to purchase land north of the Ohio for a Negro colony. He questioned, however, the desirability of establishing such a colony within the limits of the Union and bound to become part of it. His mind then turned to the possibility of locating it beyond those limits, by purchasing Indian lands on the northern frontier with British consent. Whereupon he worried that the climate would be too rigorous for black settlers. Thomas Brannagan published his "Serious Remonstrances Addressed to the Citizens of the Northern States and their Representatives, being an Appeal to their Natural Feelings and Common Sense; Consisting of Speculations and Animadversions, on the Recent Revival of the Slave Trade in the American Republic" in Philadelphia in 1805. In it he made the proposal that the government should appropriate a few thousand acreas of land about 2,000 miles from the existing borders for the purpose of establishing a new Negro state. In 1816, the Kentucky Abolition Society memorialized the House of Representatives in behalf of colonizing the "free people of color" on the public lands. In the first two decades of the 19th century, colonization on the mainland and in Africa went side by side, and the latter won out only because it came to be considered more feasible.

Both whites and Negroes continued to toy with the colony or state idea for many years. A considerable number of the free black inhabitants of Richmond, Virginia, issued a statement in 1817 in support of the Colonization Society's principle of physical separation. But they wanted the black colony to be located on the Missouri river or any other place in the United States that Congress might prefer, not in Africa. In 1833, Texas was proposed as the site of a Negro colony; nothing came of it. One Negro convention protested against Africa, but contended: "We see nothing contrary to the Constitution, to Christianity, justice, reason, or humanity, in granting us a portion of the Western territory." The region on the Gulf of Mexico came up again in 1874 in a book by James S. Pike. A "Negro Exodus" took place in 1879 and 1881, mainly from Louisiana and South Carolina to Kansas. Oklahoma came in for some attention toward the end of the century.* Edwin P. McCabe, a former State Auditor of Kansas, led a campaign to make Oklahoma a Negro state. An editorial in the *Indianapolis Freeman* in 1905 was convinced that "it would be an easy matter for the colored people to make Oklahoma and Indian Territory a State under their own control and management; where all the opportunities of any other American would be theirs." The editorial was probably an easy matter to write.

IN THIS century there have been three main expressions of the concept of a Negro state, each of them in its way very different from the others.

The first was set forth by Cyril V. Briggs, the founder of a little-known organization, the African Blood Brotherhood. Briggs, a native of the British West Indies, was an editor of the *Amsterdam News* in New York during World War I. While Garvey was coming up with his grandiose plan for a Negro state in Africa, Briggs countered it with the view that the "race problem" could be solved by setting up an independent Negro nation on American territory. In editorials published in September 1917, he argued: "Considering that the more we are outnumbered, the weaker we will get, and the weaker we get the less respect, justice or opportunity we will obtain, is it not time to consider a separate political existence with a government that will represent, consider, and advance us? As one-tenth of the population, backed with many generations of unrequited toil and half a century of contribution, as free men, to American prosperity, we can with reason and justice demand our portion for purposes of self-government and the pursuit of happiness, one-tenth of the territory of continental United States." He suggested locating the "colored autonomous State" in the West, either in the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, or, as he thought preferable, in California and Nevada.

Briggs's anti-war stand led to his resignation from the paper. In September 1918, he began to publish a monthly magazine, the *Crusader*, which a year later became the organ of his new organization, the African Blood Brotherhood. It came out "for African Liberation and Redemption," which was later changed to "for immediate

* A deeply moving and somewhat bizarre footnote to the Oklahoma story was the career of Alfred Charles Sam, known as "Chief Sam." Claiming to be an African tribal chief born in the Gold Coast, but speaking with a British accent, he appeared in Okfuskee County in Oklahoma, where many Negroes had settled, some of them former slaves of Indians as well as whites. How the whites shamelessly disenfranchised the Negroes in the county to gain political control is more than ever worth pondering today. To these disheartened American Negroes, "Chief Sam" came as a mysterious savior (somewhat the way "W. D. Fard" later came to the Detroit Negroes), and they signed up in the hundreds, bought stock in his trading company, sold off everything they owned, and waited for him to take them to his tribal lands in the British colony. A boatload set forth in August 1914 aboard the *Liberia*, bought by Sam's company. It arrived at its destination; soon everything went wrong. Most of the emigrants eventually straggled back to the United States. The historians of this venture—a small-scale forerunner of Garveyism—comment: "They did not want to be Americans; but now they found that they did not want to be Africans either" (William E. Bittle and Gilbert Geis, *The Longest Way Home*, Wayne State University Press, 1964, p. 196).

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protection and ultimate liberation of Negroes everywhere." The name of the Brotherhood derived from an African rite of fraternization by mingling drops of blood. The first members numbered fewer than twenty, all in Harlem and most of them West Indian in origin. It spread to other parts of the United States and the West Indies, never exceeding 3,000 members at its peak. Set up as a secret revolutionary organization, it was little known for a long time. Whereas Briggs had demanded a state within the United States in the *Amsterdam News,* he changed his mind in the *Crusader.* In 1919, he came out for a Negro state in Africa, South America, or the Caribbean, to which American Negroes could emigrate. Gradually, he linked the national and social elements in his thinking, as in this prescription in 1921: "The surest and quickest way, then, in our opinion, to achieve the salvation of the Negro is to combine the two most likely and feasible propositions, viz.: salvation for all Negroes through the establishment of a strong, stable, independent Negro State (along the lines of our own race genius) in Africa and elsewhere; and salvation for all Negroes (as well as other oppressed people) through the establishment of a Universal Socialist Co-operative commonwealth."

In effect, Briggs wanted a Negro state, and it was not so important where. Though both were West Indians and their aims were not fundamentally dissimilar, Briggs and Garvey staged one of the most bitter internecine battles of the period. Briggs criticized Garvey for running a one-man movement. When Garvey rejected an offer of cooperation, Briggs accused him of "loose chatter and mock heroics." Garvey hit back at the light-complexioned Briggs by calling him a white man passing himself off as a Negro—a favorite Garveyite anathema. Briggs sued for libel, and Garvey was forced to apologize publicly.

This mix-up shows how complex were the personal and political factors in the pro-African movements. In these very years, Garvey, Du Bois, and Briggs were working toward some form of the same end. Garvey was ostensibly all Back-to-Africa, but his only mass constituency was in, and never moved from, the United States. Du Bois was interested in working for Africa from a base in the United States. Briggs started out by locating his Negro state in the United States rather than in Africa, but the lure of Africa proved too strong for him, too, and he gave his organization an African name, besides conceding that Africa might be more suitable than the United States. Africa beckoned to all of them, and it was just as far away as it had always been for a century.

Briggs and the African Blood Brotherhood have a special interest for us because they provided, in 1921, the first Negro contingent for the American Communist movement, which had been founded two years earlier. Besides Briggs, Richard B. Moore, Lovett Fort-Whiteman, Otto Hall and his brother, Haywood Hall (better known as Harry Haywood), were recruited into the party from the Brotherhood. Otto Hall's political itinerary was symptomatic of the times. He had served overseas in the U.S. Army in World War I, and having been told that he had been "fighting for democracy," he became discontented and disillusioned upon his return with the democracy he found for his own people at home. He attended one of Garvey's spectacular meetings in Chicago, was swept into the UNIA, and signed up as an officer in the "Black Legion." When a friend gave him a copy of Briggs's new magazine, the *Crusader,* he liked its more "social" appeal even better and joined the first post of the African Blood Brotherhood organized in Chicago in 1919. Two years later, he followed Briggs into the Communist movement. In this way, they moved far to the "Left" of Garvey, who frowned on both Communism and trade unionism as white movements. Garvey once denounced white Communists and trade unionists as "more dangerous to the Negro's welfare than any other group at present." He was, in fact, a devotee of capitalism —within limits; those who "unreasonably and wantonly oppose or fight against it," he said, "are enemies to human advancement." Those who today see themselves in one side of Garveyism might do well to look at some of the other sides.

Insofar as it was Africa-oriented, the African Blood Brotherhood was another fantasy-infected movement. That its leaders could go over to Communism, which then strongly opposed any kind of African orientation for American Negroes, showed how superficial the Brotherhood's Africanism had been. It was one more indication that Negroes were looking for something they could not find in America, but it did not prove that they could find it in Africa.

VII

THE SECOND and more important Negro state theory was advanced by the Communists at the end of the 1920's. Before that, the Communists had carried on the older American radical tradition based on racial equality. At its third convention at the end of 1923, for example, the American party had repudiated the Back-to-Africa movement as "only an evasion of the real struggle and an excuse to surrender the Negroes' rights in their native land, America." It called the United States "the home of the American Negro" and championed "his full, free, and equal partnership with his white brothers in the future society."

The idea that the Negroes in the United States constituted a "national question" seems to have originated with Joseph Stalin who first mentioned it in 1925 to Otto Hall, one of five Ne-

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groes sent to Moscow to study at the Communist University of Toilers of the East, which specialized in two groups of students—one from the Soviet East and the other from colonial and dependent countries. No one paid much attention to Stalin's suggestion until 1928 when the doctrine of "the right of self-determination of the Negroes in the Black Belt" was adopted in a preliminary form at the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International in the summer of 1928. It was revised and issued in final form two years later.

At that time, 72.6 per cent of all Negroes still lived in twelve Southern states, and 51.1 per cent in the rural portions of those states. In 189 counties of this area, the Negroes accounted for over one-half the population. The "Black Belt" was defined as that area in which there had been a continuous Negro majority. By adding contiguous counties in which there was a substantial Negro minority, a larger area of 477 counties could be obtained in which Negroes constituted 44.8 per cent of the total population. Thus a map could be—and was—drawn of the Black Belt and the so-called Border Territory which implied where the Negroes were entitled to "the right to self-determination."

This theory distinguished sharply between the North and the South. It recognized that the Negro masses in the North were "working for assimilation." Therefore it made "equal rights" the main slogan in the North and a subordinate one in the South. If Negroes wanted their own special schools or "government organs," Communists were told to support them, but such demands were expected primarily in the South, not the North. In the Communist party and its "auxiliary" fronts, however, special Negro organizations were ruled out; they were required to bring blacks and whites together more closely than ever before.

Thus the Communist program tried to establish a delicate balance between black-and-white integration (or "assimilation," as it used to be called) and black nationalism. Even the latter was also very delicately equilibrated. The *right* to Negro self-determination in the Black Belt was stressed, not necessarily its realization. At one point, early in 1930, the American Communists interpreted the policy to mean the right of self-determination "to the point of separation." But the then Acting Secretary went to Moscow for consultations and was told, on the highest authority—no doubt Stalin himself—that this phrase went too far and had to be deleted.* The final version left open whether the Negroes themselves would want to set up an independent Negro state. "Complete right to self-determination includes also the right to governmental separation, but does not necessarily imply that the Negro population should *make use of this* right in all circumstances, that is, that it must actually separate or attempt to separate the Black Belt from the existing governmental federation with the United States," it stated. "If it desires to separate, it must be free to do so; but if it prefers to remain federated with the United States it must also be free to do that" (italics in original). If and when a "proletarian revolution" took place in the United States, moreover, Negro Communists were advised to come out *against* complete separation from the United States and to try to convince the Negro population in the Black Belt that federation was more desirable.

This position may be described as conditional Negro statism. The Communists held on to it for about five years, until the Popular Front policy was adopted in 1935. As they later admitted, it fell on deaf ears. It drew almost no support outside the party itself. It went much too far for most Negroes and not far enough for the extreme nationalists. If the Communists made any progress among Negroes in the 1930's, it was due to their militant championing of "equal rights," not "self-determination." One reason for the failure of self-determination was that it went against the tide of history. While the Communists were discovering the Black Belt, it was already breaking up. About 200,000 Negroes migrated North annually after 1916. The number of counties in which Negroes comprised 50 per cent or more of the population in the twelve Southern states went down from 262 in 1910, to 222 in 1920, 190 in 1930, 178 in 1940, 151 in 1950, and 134 in 1960. The exodus to the North was slowed during the depression, but it picked up momentum toward the end of the 1930's and turned into a flood in the next two decades. By 1960, Negroes in the twelve Southern states accounted for only 53.5 per cent of the total Negro population and those in the rural portions only 23.7 per cent of the total population. In effect, the Black Belt has been getting smaller and less black for half a century, literally cutting the ground under the thesis of its "self-determination."

THE OFFICIAL American Communists were not the only ones who flirted with some form of "self-determination" in the 1930's. A Chicago lawyer, Oscar C. Brown, tried to set up a non-Communist movement "for the establishment of the Forty-Ninth State," which he envisaged as "not a separate nation but an interdependent commonwealth like any other of the present 48 states." It was launched in the mid-30's, just as the Communists were beginning to soft-pedal their program for the Black Belt, and Brown was no more successful. The 49th State idea never caught on.

* I am now working on the third volume of my history of American Communism, dealing with the 1930's, in which this part of the story will be told in detail. The background is fully covered in the second volume, *American Communism and Soviet Russia*, Chapter 15.

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Curiously, the most tenacious advocate of Negro "self-determination" in that decade was Leon Trotsky. In 1933, he advised his reluctant American followers to support the Negroes' right "to separate a piece of land for themselves," whether or not they were a majority in any state. He held out the possibility that the Negroes might well get to the "proletarian dictatorship" ahead of the white workers through the medium of self-determination. Again in 1939 he insisted that the American Trotskyists should take a positive position with respect to a demand for self-determination, as long as it came from the Negroes themselves. "If you wish to take a part of the country, it is all right," he told his disciples to say, "but we do not wish to make the decision for you."*

In the past year, one old-time Negro Communist, Claude Lightfoot, tried to resurrect the old line of self-determination. He came out for a revised version which would apply to "the people as a whole and not to a territorial unit," as in the past, but he failed to make clear how or where a "people as a whole" could establish a nation without some form of "territorial unity." Lightfoot does not seem to have convinced other Negro Communist leaders.†

VIII

We have now come to the forms which black nationalism is taking at the present time. The oldest and largest contemporary black nationalist movement is the Nation of Islam, better known as the Black Muslims.

The legendary origins of this movement come close to pure fantasy. It goes back to the first "Back-to-Islam" movement founded in 1913 by a forty-seven-year-old native of North Carolina, Timothy Drew, who changed his name to Nobel Drew Ali. In that year, he founded a "Moorish Science Temple" in Newark, New Jersey, where he had apparently worked as an expressman. In the next decade and a half, other temples were set up in Pittsburgh, Detroit, Chicago, and elsewhere. Thus Garvey's back-to-Africa-ism and Drew Ali's back-to-Islamism flourished at about the same time, though the former at its height reached many more people than the latter. Despite little formal education, Drew Ali was somehow attracted to Oriental lore, or what he called "Moorish Science." He hit on the idea that American Negroes could achieve salvation simply by making themselves into "Asiatics," or, more specifically, Moors whose ancestors had come from Morocco. Thus Drew Ali provided American Negroes with a new national origin and made them part of a far-flung Moorish Nation which had extended to North America. Unlike Garvey, he did not tell his followers to leave the United States or found an independent state. His emigrationism was purely psychological. He taught that it was enough for Negroes to identify with an Islamic African nation and adopt its religion. Thereafter, they had only to wait for the inevitable destruction of white or European rule to come into their own. Drew Ali was mysteriously killed in Chicago in 1929, seemingly in a struggle for power within his own movement.

"Moorish Science" was not the only form of psychological emigrationism. As early as 1900, Negro preachers traveled through the Carolinas spreading the word that the so-called Negroes were really the lost sheep of the House of Israel. The first "Black Jewish" congregation was organized about 1915, at the same time Drew Ali's movement was coming up. The largest sect of Black Jews in Harlem, according to Howard Brotz who has studied them closely, believes that they really derive from the Ethiopian Hebrews, or Falashas, and that slavery robbed them of their true identity. Unlike the Garveyites, however, the Black Jews, who number only about 1,000, have never been interested in politics; they are satisfied to trust wholly in the Messiah.**

Psychological emigrationism of the Moorish Science or Black Jewish type makes it possible to reject the status of being an American Negro without accepting a pro-white orientation or what has usually gone along with it, Christianity (in the case of the Black Jews, this is achieved by identifying with the Biblical patriarchs, who were allegedly black). Its substitute nationalism assumes a purely spiritual or religious form, but it serves much the same purpose as a more mundane nationalism.

In any case, the Islamic line of black nationalism did not die out with Drew Ali. In 1930, a stranger claiming to be the reincarnation of Drew Ali suddenly appeared in Detroit. His name is usually given as Wallace D. or W. D. Fard. Legend has it that he first came as a peddler who went from house to house in the Negro neighborhood selling raincoats and silks. Once admitted into homes with his wares, he gradually cast a spell on his would-be customers, many of them women, with his exotic ideas. He told them that the silks came from a faraway country that was once their own. His "light color" and "oriental" features fostered the belief that he was a Moslem, an impression he did nothing to discourage. One story had him born in Mecca, the son of a wealthy member of the very tribe to which the Prophet Mohammed had himself belonged. Another tale gave him a British education in preparation for a career in the diplomatic service of the Kingdom of Hejaz. Soon

* "Documents on the Negro Struggle," *Bulletin of Marxist Studies*, No. 4, pp. 10, 13, 16.

† This controversy appeared in *Political Affairs*, November 1968 (Lightfoot) and March 1969 (James E. Jackson and Ted Bassett).

** Howard Brotz, *The Black Jews of Harlem* (Free Press, 1964).

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Fard came to be regarded as a "prophet" in his own right, sent to bring freedom, justice, and equality to his black brethren in North America who, he said, belonged to the same race as his own. He spoke in mysterious metaphors—of the Black Nation as his "Uncle" and its white oppressor as the "Cave Man," "Satan," or the "blue-eyed devils." He slowly weaned his followers away from the Bible to the Koran as the violence of his anti-white teachings increased. As C. Eric Lincoln, one of the main students of the Black Muslim movement, notes, Fard helped his followers to relive, "at least in fantasy, the glorious history of Black Afro-Asia."*

By 1930, the Prophet Fard had gained enough disciples to found the first Temple of Islam in Detroit. He developed an organization on a clearly nationalistic, if somewhat fanciful, basis. His message was addressed to the "Nation of Islam." He set up a military body known as the "Fruit of Islam." As his movement grew, he appointed a Minister of Islam with a staff of assistant ministers. He insisted that his followers were not Americans and should not pledge allegiance to the American flag. One short-lived splinter group, headed by Abdul Mohammed, challenged Fard on this point and broke away.

One of Fard's chief lieutenants was Elijah Poole, a Georgia Negro who had migrated to Detroit in the early 1920's. Fard renamed him Elijah Muhammad and appointed him the chief Minister of Islam. Soon thereafter, apparently in 1934, Fard disappeared as suddenly and inexplicably as he had appeared. Elijah Muhammad moved to Chicago, where Temple No. 2 had been founded, and from there built up the large and prosperous movement on the slender foundation left to him by Fard, who was elevated to the god-like status of "Allah," while Elijah Muhammad took over as his Prophet or the "Messenger of Allah."

ONLY THE nationalist element in the "Nation of Islam" or Black Muslim movement need concern us here. At its base is the notion of an Islamic nation which was once "lost" in North America and to which the American Negroes belong. Thus the latter were always Muslims without knowing it, and Elijah Muhammad was sent to "find" them and bring them the message of their true past and certain future. In the distant past, they and not the Jews were the seed of Abraham with whom God made the covenant, and they specifically descend from the ancient tribe of Shabazz. The larger "Black Nation" embraces the entire colored world, excluding only the whites. Within the black Nation the so-called Negroes make up the Nation of Islam which constitutes a chosen people, appointed to lead the way toward destruction of the present dominant white civilization. Victory over the whites is assured because the blacks are intrinsically good, beautiful, and superior, the whites inherently evil, ugly, and inferior. In the end, the white world with its Christian religion will give way to the rule of the Black Nation and its Muslim faith, which will usher in a new era of eternal peace, happiness, and righteousness. Elijah Muhammad has hinted that the change may come in 1970, though only Allah knows the exact day.

This mythology obviously contains a potentially explosive mixture. If it has not erupted as forcefully as other types of black nationalism have done, the cause partly lies in the eschatology itself. Inasmuch as Allah has already decreed the total, apocalyptic victory of the Black Nation, the Nation of Islam can afford to wait for the promised day of judgment in the United States. Meanwhile, Elijah Muhammad's practical politics tend to reduce rather than to exacerbate black-white confrontations. The Black Muslim political outlook clearly goes back to the fundamental proposition stated by Martin R. Delany over a hundred years ago—that the American Negroes constitute a "nation within a nation." But whereas Delany wanted the Negro nation to emigrate from the United States, Elijah Muhammad advocates both staying in the United States and completely separating from the present white majority. The ultimate goal is a black state within the present borders of the United States; the immediate program calls for black separatism and self-sufficiency, especially in the social and economic spheres. Muhammad has asked for three, four, or more states to be set aside as an independent Black Republic. "If they don't want us to mix with them in their equality," he has pleaded, "give us a place in America" and "give us a territory." He has also been quoted as saying that the separate black state or territory "doesn't have to be in America," but the emphasis has always been on the justice of setting up a sovereign black state made up of several existing U.S. states, with technical and financial assistance to help in its establishment. Inasmuch as Muhammad has also taught that his nation's native land is not in the United States but somewhere in the East, this preference for an American homeland may seem inconsistent—but the inconsistency reflects the recurrent disparity in even the most extreme black nationalism between idea and reality. If anyone should leave the United States, Elijah Muhammad maintains, it should be the whites, who belong in Europe.

In effect, the Muslims' nationalism falls mainly into the category of "internal statism." Yet, in another respect, Elijah Muhammad's teachings

* C. Eric Lincoln, *The Black Muslims in America* (Beacon Press, 1961), p. 13. Most of what is known about Drew Ali and W. D. Fard first appeared in 1945 in *They Seek a City* by Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy, a revised edition of which is *Anyplace But Here* (Hill & Wang, 1966, especially pp. 205-225).

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resemble those of Marcus Garvey, for whom Muhammad has expressed "a very high opinion." Garvey wished to make American Negroes into Africans; Muhammad has wanted to transform them into Asiatics, though in recent years he has also shown a greater interest in Africa. While the Muslims have physically located their future state in the United States, they have at the same time fled psychologically from the historical condition of the American Negro in the United States. Like Garveyism, too, Muslimism has organized itself, with or without statehood, into a kind of black economic and social enclave. The Muslims already practice economic nationalism even if they are able only to dream of political nationalism. They believe in a completely separate black economy and have, like the Garveyites, set up numerous communal businesses, including farms, groceries, restaurants, and clothing stores. In their economic emphasis, the Muslims go back to the tradition of Booker T. Washington, without his adaptive political overtones. Politically, the Black Muslims regard the American political process as irrelevant; they refuse to take any part in it—they do not, for example, vote in elections; and they will not bear arms in its defense.

In its internal structure, the "Nation of Islam" is built on strictly authoritarian state-within-a-state lines. Elijah Muhammad, the Messenger, is the latter-day equivalent of an all-powerful theocratic ruler. He heads, by divine right, with absolute authority, the counterpart of a church-state. Under him, subject to his supreme will, are the Ministers of each Temple, whom he alone appoints; the Supreme Captains in charge of various subsidiary organizations, also responsible only to him; and a hierarchy of lower officers—captains; first, second, and third lieutenants; investigators; secretaries. The Muslims have the rudiments of an independent economy, a school system, a self-defense corps, vocational training, and even their own flag. Of the "Fruit of Islam," the self-defense corps, E. U. Essien-Udom has remarked: "Ideologically, the organization fits into the general belief of the Muslims that the Nation of Islam is a nation within a nation, and . . . must have its own government."*

The Black Muslims show how many different elements and influences can go into a single case-history of black nationalism—ethnological fantasy, theological credulity, internal statism, psychological emigrationism, economic separatism, political isolationism, and individual self-improvement. Thus far the movement has mainly attracted the poorest and least-educated Negroes in the North, many of them born in the South. From all accounts, it has given them new dignity, self-discipline, and social responsibility. Whatever fantasy there may be in its black nationalism, the Nation of Islam provides a new day-by-day reality for those whom Elijah Muhammad once called "Negroes in the mud," and thus, paradoxically, enables them to live more happily and productively in the here and now. The political and theological mystique may be a small price to pay for the simple, homely virtues inculcated by the Messenger of Allah who also wages a holy war against drunkenness, delinquency, drug addiction, prostitution, idleness, ignorance, and self-denigration.

IX

And so black nationalism continues to haunt American Negro movements and messiahs. It has just enough reality to recur in new manifestations and just enough unreality to revive old fantasies. Where to draw the line between reality and unreality is its greatest problem, which the most recent advocates have done little to solve or even in some cases to recognize.

Malcolm Little, who assumed the name of Malcolm X, was perhaps the most remarkable figure as yet produced by the resurgence of black nationalism. His autobiography belongs with the great human documents of our time. His father was a Baptist minister in Omaha, Nebraska, who spent most of his time organizing for Marcus Garvey's UNIA. Malcolm's mother told him that threats from the Ku Klux Klan forced the family to move from Omaha—in which case the local Klansmen did not know that Garvey was the top Klansmen's favorite Negro. Malcolm was one of the "Negroes in the mud" saved by Elijah Muhammad. At the age of twenty-three, serving a ten-year prison sentence for stealing, he received a letter from an older brother "who was forever joining something" that he had discovered the "natural religion for the black man." It was the Nation of Islam. His brothers and sisters were converted first. They persuaded Malcolm, still in prison, to believe in Allah and his Messenger. The story of how Malcolm educated himself in prison in an effort to find out how much truth there was in Elijah Muhammad's teachings is infinitely moving; it resembles the once-common experience of young workers whose school was the Socialist movement in which it was necessary to learn how to read in order to read Marx, Engels, Bebel, or Jaurès.

One day, in prison, Malcolm prayed all night to Allah, and was rewarded with the fleeting vision of a man with a light-brown skin, an Asiatic countenance, and oily black hair sitting beside his bed. Later he came to believe that his phantom visitor had been none other than Master

* *Black Nationalism* (University of Chicago Press, 1962; Dell paperback edition, 1964, p. 167). This book is especially good on the "eschatology" (pp. 140-59). There is also a more journalistic treatment in Louis E. Lomax, *When the Word Is Given . . .* (World Publishing Co., 1963).

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W. D. Fard, the original Messiah. After several years of imprisonment, Malcolm was released, joined the Muslim Temple in Detroit, and from there went on to become the Muslim Minister of the New York Temple in 1954. He changed his last name from "Little" to "X," in Muslim fashion, to stand for the African family name which he could never know. By the end of the decade, Malcolm rivaled Muhammad in influence and fame, outside if not inside the movement. He was far more quick-witted and sharp-tongued than his teacher and attracted to himself far more publicity, especially from white publications and television programs. Jealousy in Muhammad's entourage and, to some extent, Malcolm's increasing freedom of expression began to estrange them. In 1963, Malcolm broke with Muhammad over what he considered to be the latter's moral transgressions, and after a personal pilgrimage to Mecca and Africa, formed his own Organization of Afro-American Unity. Malcolm X was murdered by gunmen as he was addressing a meeting of the OAAU in February 1965, three months before his fortieth birthday.

ONE DIFFICULTY in assessing what Malcolm X stood for is that, ideologically, there were at least two Malcolm X's—one the orthodox, faithful Muslim follower of Elijah Muhammad, the other the independent leader of his own movement after his break with Muhammad. Malcolm was a follower for twelve years, a leader in his own right for only one. His autobiography was largely written—or told to his collaborator, Alex Haley—in his first phase. It is just as well that this is so or we would never have obtained such a full and vivid self-portrait of Malcolm as a Muslim. In the first two-thirds of the book, then, Malcolm has few if any original ideas to contribute. Whites were still the natural enemies of blacks, and blacks could liberate themselves only by separating themselves totally from whites. In his last public speech as a Muslim on December 1, 1963, he took the position that it would be best for "the 22 million ex-slaves [to be sent] *back to our own homeland*" in Africa, but that if the white U.S. government was "afraid" of doing that, then "America must set aside some separate territory here in the Western Hemisphere, where the two races can live apart from each other."

Malcolm first began to reexamine the black-white relationship, according to his own account, in Jedda in 1964 en route to the holy city of Mecca. "I've had enough of someone else's propaganda," he wrote to a friend. "I'm for truth, no matter who tells it. I'm for justice, no matter who it is for or against. I'm a human being first and foremost, and as such I'm for whoever and whatever benefits humanity *as a whole*." In effect, he came to distinguish between whites and white racists. "I don't speak against the sincere, well-meaning, good white people," he said publicly. "I have learned that there *are* some. I have learned that not all white people are racists. I am speaking and my fight is against white *racists*." Against the latter, he held that any and all means were necessary in the fight.

The months left to him were too few for Malcolm to think his way through to anything like a comprehensive or even a coherent position. In the final chapter of his autobiography, he still remarked that "a true *Negro* revolt might entail, for instance, fighting for separate black states within this country—which several groups and individuals have advocated, long before Elijah Muhammad." Yet a few pages later, he defined the mission of his newly-formed Organization of Afro-American Unity in quite different terms. It was, he said, "an all-black organization whose ultimate objective was to help create a society in which there could exist honest white-black brotherhood." The two programmatic statements which he composed for the organization say hardly more than that "we will support the aspirations of our people for brotherhood and solidarity in a larger unity transcending all organizational differences," in the first one; or that "we are not opposed to multi-ethnic associations in any walk of life" but that Afro-American ethnic unity is a necessary precondition for beneficial "ethnic intermingling," in the second. By this time, Malcolm was far less interested in a separate Afro-American (to use his terminology) nation than in a revolutionary internationalism, the exact nature of which was still hazy to him at the time of his death. He was drawn to the Trotskyists without sharing all their presuppositions. In his last months, he did not want to use the expression "black nationalism" any more and told an interviewer for the Trotskyist youth organ, exactly one month before his assassination, that "I still would be hard pressed to give a specific definition of the overall philosophy which I think is necessary for the liberation of the black people in this country."

IN EFFECT, the nationalist legacy of Malcolm X is extremely problematic and ambiguous. A Trotskyist writer, George Breitman, who had made a careful study of Malcolm's last year, contends that "he was becoming black nationalist plus revolutionary."* But by black nationalist at this stage, Breitman means little more than that Malcolm wanted to solve black problems first, not that he had anything more to do with black American nationhood. In any case, his intense emphasis on ties with black Africa as the "motherland" was culturally and politically related to the old Back-to-Africa emigrationism. Indeed to the extent that he related Afro-American liberation in particular to African liberation in general, he

* *The Last Year of Malcolm X* (Schocken Books, 1967), p. 68.

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might be said to be the exponent of a kind of international black revolutionary emigrationism. He was primarily an inspired agitator, not an original ideologist, and he picked up bits and pieces of what he considered to be useful ideological baggage as he went along. Those who take his name in vain to advance their own favorite nationalist recipes do his memory no service.

X

OTHER RECENT attempts to define black nationalism have been hardly more satisfactory. A case in point is the concept of "Black Power" advocated by Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton.

Carmichael and Hamilton start with a seemingly momentous major premise: "black people in this country form a colony." This colony, they hastily admit, is no ordinary, recognizable one. In order to make it fit American conditions, they quickly redefine colonialism as but another name for "institutional racism." In the next sentence, they recognize a difficulty: "Obviously, the analogy is not perfect." The first reason for its imperfection, as they see it, takes us close to our main concern:

> One normally associates a colony with a land and people subjected to, and physically separated from, the "Mother Country." This is not always the case, however; in South Africa and Rhodesia, black and white inhabit the same land—with blacks subordinated to whites just as in the English, French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish colonies. It is the objective relationship which counts, not rhetoric (such as constitutions articulating equal rights) or geography.*

It is, of course, true that blacks and whites inhabit the same land in South Africa and Rhodesia—about four blacks to one white in the Union of South Africa and about seventeen blacks to one white in Rhodesia. In the United States, the proportion is approximately nine whites to one black. Is the difference inconsequential? In addition, South Africa and Rhodesia were age-old black lands colonized and conquered by whites only in the last century: whites and blacks came to the United States under very different circumstances. To cite South Africa and Rhodesia as colonial prototypes for the United States because whites and blacks inhabit the same land in all three obviously leaves much to be desired.

We are confronted here with a simple confusion of terms. A colony requires something more than political, economic, and social discrimination or oppression, especially of a minority. It requires precisely what Carmichael and Hamilton deny—a historic relationship of a people to a land. Without this, there may be discrimination or oppression, but not the status of a colony. If black Americans constituted a colony, the implications would be relatively simple and obvious. Colonies rebel to throw out their alien rulers and establish national independence and sovereignty. The Algerians rose against the French, expelled them en masse, and set up their own state.

If American blacks truly constituted a colony, Carmichael and Hamilton would no doubt advocate the same course here. That they do not, that they in fact advocate something much less and something very different in the name of "Black Power," makes clear that they promise far more than they deliver.

For when Carmichael and Hamilton spell out their own program, what do they propose? In the main, they want blacks, as they put it, to "close ranks," to create "power bases, of strength," "to gain control of their own communities," to obtain "black self-determination and black self-identity." But for what purpose? They say that the black ethnic group must first close ranks in order to "*enter the open society*." They call for power bases, of strength, "from which black people can press to change local or nationwide patterns of oppression—instead of from weakness." Their ultimate values and goals are, they insist, "an effective share in the total power of the society." Black self-determination and black self-identity—by which they mean Black Power—aim at "full participation in the decision-making processes affecting the lives of black people, and recognition of the virtues in themselves as black people." Indeed, they sum up their ultimate goal in terms which fair-minded and decent whites could easily accept: "Ultimately, the gains of our struggle will be meaningful only when consolidated by viable coalitions between blacks and whites who accept each other as co-equal partners and who identify their goals as politically and economically similar. At this stage, given the nature of the society, distinct roles must be played."

But where does all this leave the concept of an existing black "colony" within the United States? It cannot possibly mean what the Algerians meant in relation to the French. The "colony" that Carmichael and Hamilton claim to represent does not aim at nationhood; at no point do they even refer to nationhood. They want little more than a fair share of the historic American commitment. They decry the rhetoric of equal constitutional rights but are not above the rhetoric of a colonial revolution that is neither truly colonial nor truly revolutionary. A true colony aims at more than full participation in the decision-making process of the existing nation; a true revolution aims at overthrowing the existing deci-

* Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power* (Vintage Books, 1967), p. 6. This book does not necessarily represent Carmichael's subsequent political position. He went over to the Black Panthers in 1967 and left them in 1969. Nevertheless, the book stands, and its readers must judge it on its own terms.

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sion-making process, not at participating in it.

XI

CARMICHAEL and Hamilton are not the only ones who have had trouble with the notion of a black colony in the United States. It has become the fashionable cliché of present-day black nationalism, though none of those who use it quite know what to do with it. The problem of how to go from "colony" to "nation" has also puzzled the Black Panthers whose ideas have spread far beyond their ranks.

The Black Panther party was formed in Oakland, California, in October 1966 by two young black nationalists, Huey P. Newton, then twenty-five, and Bobby Seale, five years older. The guiding spirit and dominant personality was—and is—Newton. His family, which he once described as "lower class, working class," moved from Louisiana, where he was born, the youngest of seven children, to California. He graduated from two-year Merritt College, in Oakland, where he met Seale. At the school they took their first step toward nationalist political activity by joining a local Afro-American Association, which soon proved insufficiently militant for them. Newton wanted to become a lawyer, Seale an actor. About a year at San Francisco Law School convinced Newton that he was not cut out to be a lawyer. Seale drifted from odd job to odd job without getting very far in his chosen career. One evening, during an argument at a party, Newton slashed a black auto worker with a steak knife, and spent eight months in jail for the assault. After his release, he and Seale got together again, and according to one version, Seale stimulated his renewed political activity by giving him Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* to read. When some of their younger friends formed a Soul Students Advisory Council at Merritt to demand a "black curriculum," they took an interest in it. An incident in Berkeley apparently led them to go much farther. It seems that a white policeman tried to arrest Seale for blocking the sidewalk by reciting poems from a chair at an outdoor café. A fight ensued; no one was arrested. But Newton and Seale thereupon decided to give up the Soul Students Advisory Council and to form a broader organization called the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense.* The name was later shortened to Black Panther party to emphasize a larger goal than "self defense." The panther reference came from the symbol of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization which had been launched in Alabama six months earlier.

The Panthers seemed at first little more than another self-appointed band of black nationalists whose chief claim to publicity was their armed patrols which drove through the streets of Oakland. Their first important convert early in 1967 was Eldridge Cleaver, author of *Soul On Ice,* then working for *Ramparts,* whom Newton impressed by leading a group of armed Panthers into the office of the magazine and daring a policeman to shoot him. The police flinched that time, but in a shootout in Oakland in October 1967, Newton was wounded, one policeman was killed, another policeman was wounded, and Newton is now serving a two-to-fifteen year sentence for manslaughter.

From this unlikely beginning, the Black Panthers have become a formidable national movement. In less than three years, the party claims to have set up about fifty chapters. Besides Cleaver, now a fugitive, it was able to win over for a time such well-known figures as H. Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael of the Student Non-Violent (later National) Coordinating Committee (SNCC). It entered into a coalition with the white-based Peace and Freedom party, which ran Cleaver for President in the last election. Its program of black nationalism was endorsed by the Students for a Democratic Society last March, and it precipitated the SDS split in June. It is allied with a new League of Revolutionary Black Workers which has sprung up in the automobile industry and particularly threatens the United Auto Workers Union, headed by Walter Reuther. It has provided much of the inspiration, leadership, and program of the black student unions in universities, colleges, and high schools. A full study of the Panthers' unusual organization, activity, and program cannot be attempted here. They have not received enough serious attention, except possibly from the police in whom they seem to bring out the worst, not without some reason.

The ideology, which mainly concerns us here, is only partially revealed by the official platform and rules. Point 1 of the ten-point Platform and Program adopted in October 1966 reads: "We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community." Other points call for full employment, decent housing, education, and the liberation of all black prisoners from all prisons and jails. Point 10, the most nationalistic, states: "We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of the black people as to their national destiny." The rest of the document hints at the meaning of this demand by

* This version of the origins mainly comes from the only book thus far devoted to the subject, *The Black Panthers,* by Gene Marine (Signet Books, 1969). I have followed it for biographical details, not otherwise available, but one of Huey's older brothers, Lee Edward Newton, said that Huey was born in California, not Louisiana (interview, the *Black Panther,* May 19, 1969, p. 20). Marine's book is mainly devoted to the Panther's fights with the police and courts, and tells little about its program and makeup. A book on the Panthers on the order of those by Lincoln or Essien-Udom's on the Muslims is urgently needed.

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quoting the justification for secession in the Declaration of Independence of 1776. But this was hardly a fully thought out program of black nationhood. It left the decision to a vaguely-formulated plebiscite and, even if the "black colony" decided to "dissolve the political bands" connecting it to the existing United States, it did not make any effort to suggest what the next step might be.

The full Black Panther ideology emerges only in the pages of its official organ, the *Black Panther*, now published weekly in Berkeley, California, and especially in the articles, speeches, and interviews of its main leaders. Some early columns by Newton in the *Black Panther* in 1967, before he was imprisoned, have been collected in a little pamphlet, *Essays From the Minister of Defense Huey Newton*. These essays show that Newton's basic ideas were formed before his shoot-out with the Oakland police and derived mainly from Fanon, Malcolm X, Mao Tse-tung, and Fidel Castro.

For Newton, the "Black colony of Afro-America" has a unique and universal mission. "The Black people in America are the only people who can free the world, loosen the yoke of colonialism, and destroy the war machine." No other country can defeat this "monster" as long as it continues to function. "But Black people can make a malfunction of this machine from within." In order to do so, however, "They must have the basic tool of liberation: the gun"—a lesson attributed to Mao Tse-tung and Malcolm X. Guerrilla warfare is the tactical method that goes with the basic tool. As a self-styled "Vanguard Party," the Black Panthers do not think they have to do the whole job by themselves. They need only set an example and the masses will follow. Newton's own example leaves little to the imagination: "When the masses hear that a gestapo policeman has been executed while sipping coffee at a counter, and the revolutionary executioners fled without being traced, the masses will see the validity of this type of approach to resistance." The pamphlet, however, tells little about the ultimate objective beyond proposing that "Black people must now move, from the grassroots up through the perfumed circles of the Black bourgeoisie, to seize by any means necessary a proportionate share of the power vested and collected in the structure of America."

Since 1967, Black Panther ideology has become a more fully-developed, if not essentially different, system. In essence, it is a hybrid made up of revolutionary black nationalism and what is by now an old friend, "Marxism-Leninism." As a result, it is not quite like any other black nationalism or any other Marxism-Leninism. Its peculiar "amalgam," as Trotsky would have called it, of bits and pieces from Malcolm X, Mao Tse-tung, Ernesto Che Guevara, Régis Debray, and others, is typical of the kind of do-it-yourself Marxism-Leninism that has recently come into vogue. It is especially characteristic of movements which have invited themselves into the Marxist-Leninist tradition from the outside, bringing with them their own national or particularist folkways and shopping among all the current versions of the doctrine for those features or formulas which happen to suit or please them the most. In this respect Black Pantherism resembles Castroism but has gone much farther in asserting its individuality.*

WHAT IS most individual about the Black Panthers is, of course, what concerns them most—the "national liberation" of the "black colony" in the "white mother country."

The last term was apparently originated by Eldridge Cleaver. It suggests the difference between the Panthers and the Back-to-Africa nationalists. The mother country of the Panthers' black colony is white America, not Africa. Since the mother country is not Africa, there is no reason to go back to it. Without denying the existence of vestigial ties with Africa, the Panthers strongly reject and oppose the Back-to-Africa line, even in an attenuated form which they contemptuously call "cultural nationalism."

Newton has sternly disapproved of the return to African culture. "Cultural nationalism deals with a return to the old culture of Africa and that we are somehow freed by identifying and returning to this culture, to the African cultural stage of the 1100's or earlier," he has maintained. "As far as we are concerned, we believe that it's important for us to recognize our origins and identify with the revolutionary Black people of Africa and people of color throughout the world. But as far as returning per se to the ancient customs, we don't see any necessity in this." Other Panther leaders have been more emphatic. Former Minister of Education George Mason

* Organizationally, the party also shows its hybrid make-up. It is headed by a Central Committee, a term traditionally used in the Communist movement. But unlike such parties, its No. 1 leader is the "Minister of Defense"—Huey P. Newton. After him comes Bobby Seale, the "Chairman," reminiscent of Mao Tse-tung's favorite title. The next in line is the "Minister of Information," Eldridge Cleaver (in absentia). No. 4 is the "Chief of Staff," David Hilliard, an ex-longshoreman. The Central Committee also contains "Field Marshals (Underground)"; Minister of Education, Ray "Masai" Hewitt; Minister of Finance, formerly Melvin Newton; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Justice, unnamed; Prime Minister, formerly Stokely Carmichael; Communications Secretary, Kathleen Cleaver, wife of Eldridge Cleaver; and Minister of Culture, Emory Douglas, also the party's Revolutionary Artist. There is also a Minister of Religion, Father Earl Neil, whose church is located in West Oakland. At the first Black Panther wedding held in Father Neil's church on May 1, 1969, Chairman Bobby Seale officiated but used the Little Red Book, *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung*, instead of the Bible (the Black *Panther*, May 11, 1969, p. 7).

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Murray has called this kind of pro-African cultural nationalism "a fixation in a people's development like a half-formed baby," "reactionary and insane and counterrevolutionary," "a bourgeois-capitalist scheme, to confuse the masses of people, so that they will not assault the city halls, the bank tellers, and managers, or seize control of community schools."* A programmatic article in the *Black Panther* of May 25, 1969, ridiculed the "fools running around who declare that they are 'just trying to be black' by wearing dashikis and bubas and who tell black people that they should relate to African customs and African heritage that we left 300 years ago, that this will make them free, that reading black history will make them better."

Ironically, therefore, the Panthers have decided that the emphasis on Black Studies programs has gone too far. In May 1969 the present Minister of Education, Ray "Masai" Hewitt, denounced Black Studies as a "new trick bag." He told of having talked with "many brothers from Africa" who "are not hung up on Swahili or Arabic." Of the new vogue for the "natural head," he reported: "Very few of the African brothers that we met had what could be called a 'Natural Head.' They just had hair. You couldn't call it one of those custom-tailored natural heads. They never spoke Swahili and every time we told them that there were brothers here studying Swahili for the revolution, they burst out laughing." He added: "The movement toward Black Studies in colleges and other Black cultural programs have [*sic*] become a fixation. At one point in the revolutionary development of our people it was a revolutionary step. Instead of taking it as a beginning step many cultural nationalist opportunist bootlicking cowards and freaks have latched on it."

THE NATIONALIST side of the Panthers' ideology makes them emphasize black unity; the "Marxist-Leninist" side makes them emphasize a social revolution by both blacks and whites. Unlike other nationalist groups, the Panthers do not believe that the "black colony" can liberate itself alone. "We have two evils to fight, capitalism and racism," Newton says. "We must destroy both racism and capitalism." But the Panthers do not see how they can destroy capitalism and install socialism in the black community without destroying capitalism and installing socialism in the white community. As the programmatic statement in the *Black Panther* of May 25, 1969, put it: "There must be a revolution in the white mother country, led by white radicals and poor whites, and national liberation in the black and third world colony here in America. We can't triumph in the colony alone because that is just like cutting one finger off a hand. It still functions, you dig it. No, when we deal with this monster we must deal with it totally."

This suggests that the Panthers expect the black nationalist revolution to be part of, or accompanied by, a larger white social revolution. In this respect, therefore, they do not belong in the line of pure black nationalist movements, such as Garvey's. They have a foot in both national and international camps, sometimes coming down hard on the one, sometimes on the other. Yet their membership is purely black and for that reason they will probably stand or fall on the persuasiveness of their black nationalist program. Yet it is precisely in this area that they are ideologically most vague and uncertain.

The original proposal in the Platform and Program of October 1966—to hold a United Nations-supervised plebiscite—was clearly an evasion of the issue. It is, of course, highly improbable that the UN would or could hold such a plebiscite; at best the proposal passed the problem on to the black voters; and it did not tell them how the Panthers wanted them to vote. There is reason to believe that this evasiveness was deliberate and that the Panther strategists considered any more concrete position premature. At a Peace and Freedom party forum on February 11, 1968, Cleaver remarked: "It's very important to realize that in moving to gain power, you do not conceal or repudiate the land question, you hold it in abeyance. What you're saying is that we must first get ourselves organized, and then we can get some of this land." Since then, most Panther leaders, including Newton, have been content to deal with the subject in vague and general terms. Newton has gone no farther than: "Our problem is unity at this point. We have to unify ourselves. We can handle the colony better than anyone else. We are a colonized people. Many Black communities are like decentralized colonies throughout this country" (the *Black Panther*, February 17, 1969, p. 4). Murray has touched on the critical point without offering much more enlightenment: "You cannot say that wherever Black people are, there is our nation. To say this is foolishness.

* Murray was the English instructor for one semester at San Francisco State College whose dismissal, for having allegedly told students to bring guns on the campus, set off months of disorder there. Murray denied the charge, but he made a speech at Fresno State College, published in the *Black Panther* of November 16, 1968, in which he advised that "if you want campus autonomy, if the students want to run the college, if the cracker administrators don't go for it, then you control it with the gun." Panther political style is *sui generis*. What Marxist-Leninist ever defined the revolution in the language of one Panther leader: "The only way we can do this is to pick up the gun. We are gonna walk all across this motherfucking government and say Stick 'em up, motherfuckers—this is a hold-up; we come to get everything that belongs to us" (*ibid.*, October 12, 1968, p. 12). Or the way the Panthers' Jersey City branch ordered a purge of nineteen members: "The Party will no longer tolerate these counterrevolutionary m——f——s, who by their deeds are harming the interest of the Party and the People. These degenerates have aroused the anger of the people, 'the people will kill them, and we gonna kill every m——f—— who went along with their s—t'" (*ibid.*, May 4, 1969, p. 7).

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What if the masses of people you're talking about are slaves, as we are in the U.S. When you talk about nationhood, you are talking about territory (land), people, and sovereignty (power). When we talk about becoming free, we have to talk about power, getting all the goods, services, and land, and returning them equally to the oppressed and enslaved Mexicans, Blacks, Indians, Puerto-Ricans, and poor whites in the U.S. and to the rest of the oppressed and hungry people in the world" (*ibid.*, March 3, 1969, p. 4).

Eldridge Cleaver once tried to deal directly with "The Land Question and Black Liberation" in *Ramparts* magazine, April-May 1968 (reprinted in his *Post-Prison Writings and Speeches*, edited by Robert Scheer). At one point he came close to what the trouble has been: "Thus, it is not surprising that the average black man in America is schizoid on the question of his relationship to the nation as a whole, and there is a side of him that feels only the vaguest, most halting, tentative and even fleeting kinship with America. The feeling of alienation and dissociation is real and black people long ago would have readily identified themselves with another sovereignty *had a viable one existed*" (my italics—TD). Cleaver then went on to argue that no viable alternative sovereignty had ever existed. He had high praise for Marcus Garvey, but it turned out that Garvey "did not solve the specific question of Afro-America and its immediate relationship to the land beneath her feet. The practical prospect of Garvey's actual transporting blacks back to Africa turned most black people off because of a world situation and balance of power that made such a situation impossible." He gave Elijah Muhammad credit for knowing "that he had to deal with Afro-America's land hunger." But Cleaver considered Muhammad tactically wise enough to be "very careful never to identify any specific geographical location when he issued his call for land for Afro-America." Stokely Carmichael's thesis of Black Power "does not attempt to answer the land question. It does not deny the existence of that question, but rather frankly states that at the present moment the land question cannot be dealt with, that black people must put first things first, that there are a few things that must be done before we can deal with the land question."

Yet Cleaver went on to insist: "The necessity upon Afro-America is to move, now, to begin functioning as a nation, to assume its sovereignty, to demand that that sovereignty be recognized by other nations of the world." But where? The closest Cleaver came to meeting the issue was: "Black Power must be viewed as a projection of sovereignty, an embryonic sovereignty that black people can focus on and through which they can make distinctions between themselves and others, between themselves and their enemies—in short, between the white mother country of America and the black colony dispersed throughout the continent on absentee-owned land, making Afro-America a decentralized colony. Black Power says to black people that it is possible for them to build a national organization on somebody else's land."

WHAT IS "sovereignty" without land to be sovereign of? How project "sovereignty" on "somebody else's land"? What is a "decentralized colony"? Is it made up of black ghettos in New York, Chicago, Oakland, and elsewhere, separated from each other by hundreds of miles? Is ghetto "sovereignty" a truly embryonic form of national sovereignty? It may be possible to build a national organization on somebody else's land, but how build a nation on that land?

Cleaver did not raise these questions, but he was not unaware that his notion of "embryonic sovereignty" might need some clarification. He therefore seized on what he considered to be the "parallel" between early Zionism and present-day black nationalism. The Jews, he pointed out, had also been cooped up in Eastern European ghettos. Argentina and even Uganda were considered as possible sites for a Jewish homeland before the decision was finally made in favor of Palestine. The Zionists founded a virtual government in exile for a people in exile. Cleaver concluded: "They would build their organization, their government, and then later on they would get some land and set the government and the people down on the land, like placing one's hat on top of one's head. The Jews did it. It worked. So now Afro-Americans must do the same thing."

Cleaver could hardly have chosen a more unfortunate "parallel" for his cause. It is entirely based on the circumstance that the Jewish Zionists in the beginning did not have a national territorial base and were not even sure where it might be. But of one thing the Jewish Zionists were always sure—that they could not set up a national homeland in their East European ghettos. If black nationalism in the United States were prepared to get out of the American ghettos and set up a nation in Africa or elsewhere, the Zionist "parallel" might be helpful, though here again historical differences might dictate against pushing it too far. Black nationalist "Zionism" inevitably heads toward a Back-to-Africa conclusion, which Cleaver and the Black Panthers reject.

A few months later, Cleaver gave an interview to *Playboy* (October 1968) in which he was questioned about the plan adopted by a National Black Government Conference which met in Detroit in April 1968 for a "Republic of New Africa" to be made up of five Southern states. "Do you think that's a viable plan?" Cleaver was asked. "I don't have any sympathy with that approach," Cleaver replied, "but the Black Panthers feel that it's a proposal black people should be polled on." From Cleaver's articles in *Ramparts*

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and the interview in *Playboy*, it is hard to see just what kind of concrete, practical approach he would sympathize with.

On the main issue—nationhood—the "land question" has given the Panthers the most trouble. Without an answer to this question, they have not been able to make the leap from "colony" to "nation." The latter may be implicit in the former, but the inability to make it explicit may also imply that there is something inappropriate to American conditions about the concept of a black "colony." The Panthers' dilemma has opened them up to attacks on two sides—from those who want a pure and simple black nationalism not dependent for its ultimate success on a white social revolution and those who want a social revolution untainted by black nationalism. It remains to be seen how long they can maintain their uneasy equilibrium between the two camps.

XII

IN THE past few years, the Back-to-Africa tendency has been reduced to little more than superficial "cultural" manifestations; a new hairdo hardly constitutes a new nation. Territorially, the most extreme wing of black nationalism, which will be satisfied with nothing less than a clearly defined nation, has swung over to locating it in what is now part of the United States. As one of the more moderate proponents of this scheme, Robert S. Browne, assistant professor of economics at Fairleigh Dickinson University, has noted, most American Negroes who went to Africa in recent years discovered that they could not feel at home in the newly independent countries which they had thought of as their homeland. "If we have been separated from Africa for so long that we are no longer quite at ease there," he concluded, "then we are left with only one place to make our home, and that is the land to which we were brought in chains."

Professor Browne was one of the main spokesmen at the Conference on Black Power which met in Newark, New Jersey, in July 1967. He presented the resolution which called for initiating "a national dialogue on the desirability of partitioning the U.S. into two separate and independent nations, one to be a homeland for white and the other to be a homeland for black Americans." It received a thunderous ovation, though he later admitted that all those who voted for it could "by no stretch of the imagination be considered active partisans of the idea of a separate state." Evidently it is the kind of proposal that some, perhaps many, Negroes will applaud without necessarily wanting to do anything about it.

Professor Browne has represented the soft-sell approach to "The Case for Black Separatism," as his article in the December 1967 *Ramparts*, which has been widely circulated in black nationalist study circles, was entitled. He insisted that the Newark resolution did not try to prejudge the merits of the proposal; it merely asked that "the legal, political, economic, and sociological implications" of partition should be seriously discussed and examined. He even presented the case as if it came from the "moderate center" and warned that failure to take it seriously would sentence the country to the "terror" of irresponsible extremists. He offered the division of British India into today's India and Pakistan as the precedent for what he had in mind. For the most part, he has contented himself with getting both whites and blacks accustomed to the idea of partition. His message is that "a sense of nationhood is groping for expression" in the black ghettos, and it may lead to two separate nations or to "some as yet untried type of human community." In another article in the New York *Times Magazine* of August 11, 1968, in which he largely repeated himself, Professor Browne based his separatist argument solely on the difference in the American Negroes' ethnic culture.

The hard-sell approach has been represented by the National Black Government Conference which met in Detroit in April 1968 (with which Cleaver was not sympathetic). It immediately set up a "Republic of New Africa," to be made up of five Southern states—Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. It endowed this "Republic" with a self-chosen government headed by Robert F. Williams, a fugitive for the past few years in Cuba, China, and elsewhere, as President; a Michigan lawyer, Milton R. Henry, as First Vice-President; a Second Vice-President, Treasurer, and Ministers of Justice, Finance, Culture and Education, and Defense.

ACCORDING to Robert Sherrill, who published a lengthy interview with him in *Esquire*, January 1969, First Vice-President Henry is the real headman of this outfit. Logically, Henry said, the black population should go back to Africa, "but logistically it is very unsound because of the difficulties of moving people, furniture, mastering the culture." However, one African custom—polygamy—would be reinstated. He also envisaged a dictatorship of the founders for the first thirty to forty years and prohibition of all trade unions. To take over the five Southern states, Henry has worked out an ingenious scheme. The basic strategy consists of gaining control of them, county by county, starting with Mississippi, which has the largest percentage of black population. Economically, this entails buying up land, as the Jews bought land in Palestine, for which purpose "Malcolm X land certificates" are offered for sale at the price of $100 each. Politically, Henry sees control of the sheriffs' offices as the key to control of the land. "Then we will have a legitimate military force, legitimate under U.S.

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law, made up of people who can be deputized and armed."

Henry was asked if they could whip the U.S. Army. "With the aid of nuclear weapons from our allies, such as China, sure we could," he replied. "China would never help us until we could show that we were capable of a separate, independent existence. But we could show that by controlling a land mass." And if Chinese nuclear power was not enough? He had another weapon: "We've got second-strike power right now in our guerrillas within the metropolitan areas—black men, armed. Say we start taking over Mississippi —which we are capable of doing right now—and the United States started to interfere. Well, our guerrillas all over the country would strike."

It is hard to take this kind of talk seriously. Paradoxically, it depends for whatever persuasiveness it may have on the relative success of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the voter registration campaign. Black voter registration in Mississippi went up from 8 per cent in 1965 to 59 per cent by late 1968. Only this unprecedented increase enabled Charles Evers to defeat a white incumbent in the election for Mayor of Fayette, Mississippi, and permitted a black slate to score a victory in Greene County, Alabama, in 1969. These historic victories, the first in Mississippi since Reconstruction, may well be followed by others in similar communities, if it means, as Mayor Evers put it, making government "work for everybody," white and black alike. The gravest danger to this democratic achievement, overdue for a century, will come not only from die-hard white supremacists but from die-hard black nationalists. Both have a vested interest in exploiting the fantasy of a black takeover, municipality by municipality, county by county, state by state.

Another version of the takeover has been put forward by Floyd McKissick, the former National Director of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). McKissick also maintains: "Black People in the United States live in a state of *de facto* nationhood." All they lack, he claims, is independence. To enable the black people to make use of the present electoral system, the federal government must make it possible for more black sheriffs and black tax collectors to be elected in counties with a black majority. This development will cause whites to move out in large numbers and open the way for blacks to move in. McKissick foresees black control of two or three states in a single generation. For some reason, however, in the end he stops short of ushering in a new stage of independent nationhood for the black-controlled states. His conclusion seems to be somewhat anticlimactic: "When Black People are in control of at least a few American states, they will be able to exert enough influence within the federal system to affect the treatment of their Black brothers in America's urban centers, as well as the exercise of American foreign policy."* It is hard to see why the Black People in the United States need to be a *de facto* nation to exert this kind of influence. But if there is anything that will stand in the way of black control of more counties, let alone entire states, it is loose thinking and writing about black "nationhood" and "independence." For these terms imply that Mr. McKissick is really asking the federal government to aid and abet the disruption and dissolution of the existing American nation. The difference between Mr. McKissick and Mr. Henry seems to be that the former wants to do "constitutionally" what the latter wants to do more forcefully—but the former's views lend themselves to so many different interpretations that it is hard to be sure what he really wants.

Professor Browne glibly mentions the need for seriously considering "population relocation," "Vice-President" Henry blithely talks of setting up a Black Legion by arming sheriffs' deputies, and Floyd McKissick foresees black control of counties leading to black control of states and beyond. The magnitude of the problem, however, is never hinted at by them or by other black nationalists with similar ideas. According to the last census of 1960, the population in the five states chosen by the "Republic of New Africa" was divided as follows:

	White		Non-white	
	Numbers	%	*Numbers*	%
Mississippi	1,257,546	58	915,743	42
South Carolina	1,551,022	65.2	829,291	34.8
Louisiana	2,211,715	68.1	1,039,207	31.9
Alabama	2,283,609	70	980,271	30
Georgia	2,817,223	71.5	1,122,596	28.5
Total	10,121,115	67.4	4,887,108	32.6

How much "population relocation" would be necessary in order to get a black population of only 50 per cent in the five states? Of a total population of 15,008,223, whites predominated by 5,234,007. It would be necessary, therefore, to move out one-half of the existing whites or move in an equal number of blacks for every remaining white. But these figures, formidable as they may be, imply nothing more than an equalization of the population, a balance that might be suitable for a biracial state. A black majority of even three-fourths—not too much to ask for a black state—would require the "relocation" of about two-thirds the present white population or moving in two or three times the number of blacks there now. And it should be remembered

* Floyd McKissick, *Three-Fifths of a Man* (Macmillan, 1969), pp. 145-46, 163-64.

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that the blacks have been moving in the opposite direction for half a century.

Another aspect of the problem deserves some attention. Even in those states with the largest proportion of black population, the distribution of that population is highly significant. Mississippi is a case in point:

	Urban	*Rural Nonfarm*	*Rural Farm*
WHITE	525,594	488,076	243,737
NON-WHITE	295,211	326,421	299,102

These figures show that the black population is still largely concentrated in the rural areas. South Carolina was the only state in which, as in Mississippi, non-whites somewhat outnumbered whites in the rural farm area. In all the other states, whites outnumbered non-whites in all three categories. Thus, demographically, the whites are predominant, and decisively predominant, in or near the cities which control the main economic and political levers of power in the modern state. The problem of "population relocation" would be enormously complicated by this factor in the present balance of forces.

The McKissick theory of county control leading to state control may also be tested by a few figures. According to the 1960 census, the number of counties with white or black majorities in the five states with the largest percentage of black population was as follows:

	WHITE	BLACK
Mississippi	52	30
South Carolina	31	15
Georgia	125	34
Louisiana (parishes)	54	10
Alabama	56	11

Thus about one-third of the counties in Mississippi and South Carolina had black majorities, some by a very narrow margin. Georgia had about one-fifth and the other two states somewhat less. The black majorities were concentrated in the most rural sectors of the states. In Greene County, Alabama, blacks outnumbered whites by more than three to one. But this was exceptional, and black political control of all the black-majority counties could not begin to take over the state.

APART FROM all other considerations, then, what do these figures tell us about the allegedly "colonial" nature of the American Negro problem? In Algeria, for example, the proportion of Frenchmen to Algerians was unusually high for a colonial situation. But even there, at the end of French rule, the French accounted for only 10 per cent of the total population. In the case of Pakistan, about six and a half million Moslems moved into it from India and about five and a half million moved out of it to India. But these numbers, huge as they were, must be measured against the total Pakistan population of almost 34 million. Algeria and Pakistan represented "population relocation" at its most extreme. Yet they cannot be compared with the problem posed by the five Southern states. In Algeria and Pakistan, the native populations rooted in the same land for centuries constituted the immense majority. A "colony," such as the black population in the Southern states is supposed to constitute, which consists of a minority, and a shrinking minority at that, presents an altogether different problem, and cannot call for the same solution.

However outlandish the idea of partition may seem to some, it was bound to arise in black nationalist circles, and the Southern states were the most likely candidates to provide the territory for a new black nation. If it is a fantasy there, it cannot even be imagined anywhere else in the United States. For good reason, Mr. Henry will have none of independent black cities because "the whites would have us surrounded." A collection of far-flung ghettos does not constitute a nation, and it is for this reason that black nationalism must ultimately seek to find a place for itself in Africa or "New Africa."

What we have now are, in the main, black rural ghettos in the South and black urban ghettos in the North. The urban ghetto as the basis of some kind of black nationalism has attracted the attention of W. H. Ferry, until recently a Fellow of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, California. He has proposed the demarcation of white city and black city "colonies." They would be subject to a Statute of Colonization containing a Reciprocal Indignities Understanding. If whites preferred to live in black colonies, they would have to abide by black colonial rule, and vice versa. Black colonies could deny normal services to whites and overcharge them for any services they might provide; black police would treat all whites as suspicious characters and "mistreat them accordingly."

This may be a sardonic caricature of what we may already see approaching, but its essential point cannot be easily overlooked. In his lecture at Williamsburg, Virginia, on June 1, 1968, George F. Kennan raised the question of whether it will not be necessary to permit the American Negro "first to have, as a number of his leaders are now demanding, a local political community of his own through which he can find his identity and gain the dignity of both authority and responsibility." If this "local political community" were to remain an integral part of the present United States, whatever its relationship to the other parts might be, it would still fail by far to satisfy the yearnings of black nationalism for a black nation. But the idea points in the direction of enabling black

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"nationalism" to find an outlet locally in those areas which are preponderantly black anyway.

XIII

One other way to get around the troublesome "land question" is, in effect, to ignore or bypass it. This strategy has been adopted by those who base black nationalism on "culture" or "consciousness" without attaching it to any particular national territory. This approach attempts to prove that there is something culturally unique about the American Negro, as if this were equivalent to a recognizable national existence.

In a lecture at Michigan State University in May 1969, LeRoi Jones declared: "Black people in America form a nation in every respect, except that they do not have political power. We are black by race, by culture, and by consciousness." Culture, he went on, was far more important than race, and then he struggled to say what he meant by culture: "Culture is the life-style of a people. It is the value system organized by the group. It is not the moral or intellectual superiority of an idea that makes it hold sway in the world—it is the power of the group."*

We have here the initial assumption that there is a black "nation" secreted somewhere in the United States and it needs only "political power" to emerge from hiding. But "political power" where and in what form? Jones begs these crucial questions by equating culture with nation. A culture, even if what he says is true, is far less clearly defined and localized than a nation. There can be a distinct culture without an independent nation, and an independent nation without a distinct culture. The Algerians, for example, did not have to stress their cultural difference from the French; they knew that they were a different people who inhabited a different land. That the cultural differences were deep undoubtedly reinforced the Algerian national consciousness, but Algeria did not owe its nationhood to these cultural differences, and it would have struggled to free itself from France even if the cultural similarities or ties had been much more pronounced and numerous.

* In 1967, Jones had tried to cope with the problem of "space." Black Power, he said, already controlled black enclaves and cities, but that was not enough. "Further control must be nationalization, separation." And this in turn meant, he went on, "absolute control of resources beneficial to a national group." How much would it take to give Harlem, Hough, and Watts "absolute control" of the resources necessary to their "nationalization"? It is perhaps asking too much of a poet and playwright to answer such a question. Yet this kind of wild and woolly black nationalism is coming out in all literary forms, losing itself in grandiose rhetoric that never bothers to face any of the hard questions it raises (LeRoi Jones, "The Need For a Cultural Base to Civil Rites & Bpower Mooments [*sic*]," in *The Black Power Revolt*, edited by Floyd B. Barbour, Extending Horizons Books, 1968, pp. 119-26).

It is not easy to define what is culturally unique in the American Negro. Julius Lester, for example, also contended in *Look Out, Whitey! Black Power's Gon' Get Your Mama!* (even a worse book would deserve a better title) that "blacks are a colonial people within" the United States. He made no effort to say more than that the black people of this alleged colony want to "control their own lives, destinies, and communities." It is hard to argue with this kind of formulation until we know more about it, especially its bearing on the question of black nationhood. Lester is most revealing, however, in his effort to define the uniqueness of black American culture. It can be explained, he says, "in that it is a culture whose emphasis is on the nonverbal, i.e., the nonconceptual." In black culture, "it is the experience that counts, not what is said." And further, "The black man knows the inherent irrationality of life." How this nonverbal, nonconceptual "culture" operates is illustrated by Lester as follows: "When the black preacher shouts, 'God is a living God,' don't argue. Get ready to shake hands with the Lord Almighty. 'I talked to God this morning and I said, "Now, listen here, Lord. You got to do something about these white folks down here. Lord, they giving us a hard time. You got to do something!"' God is like a personal friend, an old buddy, whom you talk to man-to-man."

It is remarkable how similar this stereotype is to Thomas Jefferson's classical stereotype of Negro inferiority. Jefferson thought that Negroes were more capable of "sensation than reflection." He found them "in reason much inferior." He was prepared to agree that they were "more ardent," more generally gifted musically, and not inferior morally, but he drew the line at —to use Lester's term—their ability to conceptualize. The abiding influence of Jefferson's views on the Negroes' alleged mental inferiority has been emphasized by Professor Winthrop D. Jordan in his massive work, *White Over Black*. Yet the key idea has now come back in the guise of attributing to it the function of creating a unique culture. One wonders whether Lester's latest black stereotype should not be just as offensive, at least to Negro intellectuals, as Jefferson's antiquated black stereotype, and whether the former would not in the long run produce just as much harm. In any case, "a colonial people" is essentially a political, not a cultural conception, and it is hard to see how cultural nationalists like Lester can get very far without a minimum of such conceptualization.

The problem, in fact, is not so much lack of conceptualization as the wrong kind. Harold Cruse rightly cautions that "if the Negro leadership is hampered by deficient conceptualizing of American group reality, then the Negro movement will defeat itself in the long run." His book, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (Morrow,

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1967), has the great merit of manifestly coming from an independent, critical mind. Whether it succeeds in providing a more satisfactory or even a more consistent "conceptualizing of American group reality" is more doubtful. Cruse once drops the hint that the American Negro was the subject of "a special kind of North American domestic colonialism"—but he never follows it up. He touches on the "land question" with a remark that it "can be solved only from an urban base of political power," not a rural base. But he makes no effort to clarify what he means by "political power." He adds for good measure the provocative thought that the American "land question" is now "an international issue involving Africa," which leads him to put forth the extraordinary suggestion that "there may well come a time when the race question in Africa will have to be solved by admitting specified numbers of white Rhodesians, Angolans, and South African Afrikaaners into the United States, in exchange for an equal number of Afro-Americans to take their places in Africa." What such an exchange would imply or in what possible circumstances it might take place he leaves totally unanswered—and unasked.

This ill-organized, overambitious, exasperating, and yet rewarding work is really about a much larger crisis. Inasmuch as Cruse gives the Negro intelligentsia the guiding and directing role in working out and activating what he calls "Afro-American Nationalism," the book actually deals with the crisis of the new Negro nationalism, of which it is in its own way another manifestation. To the extent that one can make out Cruse's own position, which is never developed systematically, it has little to do with "domestic colonialism" or the "land question." Cruse's main positive contribution—when he can tear himself away for a few words or sentences from paying back old scores against other Negro intellectuals—hinges on the *ethnic*, rather than the racial, character of the American Negro problem (his italics, p. 557). He chases other leads fitfully and sporadically, but he has most to say, and most originally, about the ethnic factor. Thus Cruse is at his best when he acutely distinguishes between "having a nationalistic mood and having nationalist objectives in politics, economics, and culture that relate to how Negroes as a people exist in America." The mood is real enough, but history and circumstance may preclude it from relating realistically to the condition in which the American Negro finds himself. Such a conflict is likely to produce political fantasy: "The American Negro is wedded to America and does not want to return to his ancestral Africa except in fancy, perhaps." Even Africans may suffer from this duality: "The African *has* Africa, but a severe psychic problem has cropped up among Africans sent to the United States on various assignments: Many of them have very little contact with American Negroes, feel alienated within themselves, *but do not want to return to Africa.* Alienated or no, they have become passionately attached to the ways of the cosmopolitan West, the high standard of living, the creature comforts of the affluent society" (p. 555).

As Cruse sees it, "the problem [of the American Negro] will be solved under specifically American conditions or it will never be solved, for Afro-American Nationalism is basically a black reflection of the unsolved American nationality question." By "nationality," Cruse means what the dictionary defines as "an ethnic group constituting one element of a larger unit (as a nation)." This nationality—not national—question, he says, involves several ethnic groups, not Negroes alone. But two are crucial—"Anglo-Saxon Protestants and American Negroes." In between them he sees another major group, the Jews, who make up the third component of his "fateful triangle." Cruse's chief grievance against the Jews seems to be that they have come between the Anglo-Saxon Protestants and the Negroes; he is most wrathful against Jewish Communists for having acted out "the role of political surrogates for the 'white' working class, and thereby gained the political whip of intellectual and theoretical domination of the Negro question." The Communists, and especially the Jewish Communists, obsess Cruse to such an extent that he devotes far too much of his book to them, sometimes in a manner bordering on the absurd.* In general, his idea seems to be that the Negroes must solve the American nationality problem by making a direct deal with the "Anglo-Saxons" without the intervention of the Jews who, he claims, have ideologically dominated the Negroes. Whatever merit there may be in this view, it takes us a long way from the perspective of black nationhood. In the end, Cruse advises the Negro intellectual that his "special function" is cultural.

Milton R. Henry and Harold Cruse illustrate how far apart ostensible proponents of "black nationalism" may be. About all they have in common is a mutual antipathy for "integrationists." Black nationalism today is not a party and has no party line—or it has too many parties and too many party lines. It can be identified more easily by what it is against than by what it is for. It is still seeking the right answers, and it is not yet

* "Under Jewish Communist prodding, the [American] Communist Party took up the anti-Hitler crusade in the late 1930's" (p. 168). The "crusade" was, of course, taken up in the early 1930's. There is something ludicrous about the notion that it was "Jewish Communist prodding," not *Soviet* Communist prodding, that turned the American Communists into anti-Hitler crusaders. Cruse refers to the "Jewish crusade on the Left against Hitler," as if there would have been no crusade without the Jews, and as if anti-Hitlerism was a specific Jewish creation.

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clear that it has been asking the right questions.

XIV

THE burning question is whether American black nationalism is or is not the expression of a suppressed nation. If the nationalists are right, the American Negroes have always constituted a nation—without a proper nationalism. Do we now have a black nationalism —without a proper nation?

Other nationalisms have, at bottom, a persuasively simple basis. They rest on a demand for sovereignty or self-rule in a particular territory. The Algerians could cry "Algeria for the Algerians"; the Indonesians cried "Indonesia for the Indonesians." This "territorial imperative" has given every nationalism its *raison d'être* and its popular base. Algerians, as Malcolm X discovered, could be white, but they were none the less Algerians. The definition of an Algerian was not in his color or his class, but in his relationship to his land.

American history and conditions do not permit a black relationship to a national territory. The only conceivable parallel is the case of the Jews who did not have a national territory in Palestine until they migrated there. But, as I have previously pointed out, the example of Jewish Zionism can only be made to serve the ends of Back-to-Africa black nationalism. It has no relevance to a "Black Belt" in the South, which Negroes have been migrating from rather than migrating to, or to the dispersed black ghettos in the North, the oldest of which, Harlem, is the product of only half a century. Moreover, it is doubtful whether Jewish Zionism could have survived without its historic territorial relationship to the Palestine of the Bible, however unconvincing this may seem to non-Zionists. If even this extreme and unique case does not apply to the conditions of black nationalism in the United States, then the latter is faced with a problem that is peculiar to itself, and no analogies with the so-called Third World can help to solve it.

The result is that black nationalism has been vainly looking for a surrogate sovereignty, a substitute for a nation. This need is the unfulfilled and unfulfillable wish behind the demands for separate, autonomous Black or Afro-American Studies Departments and similar phenomena in other fields. It is unfulfillable because the shadow of sovereignty can never take the place of the substance.

What Black Studies meant to the black students demanding them came out most clearly at Cornell University. The students stated openly that these studies were intended "to enable people to use the knowledge gained in the classroom and the community to formulate new ideologies and philosophies which will contribute to the development of the black nation." As part of such a program, they also demanded a physical education course on "Theory and practice in the use of small arms and hand to hand combat. Discussion sessions in the proper use of force." The gun incident at Cornell in April 1969 was headlined in the *Black Panther*: "Power At Cornell Out of The Barrel Of A Gun."

What came out explicitly at Cornell may be present implicitly in other schools. At San Francisco State College, the Black Students Union demanded an all-black department with the authority to grant a bachelor's degree in "black studies" and "the sole power to hire faculty and control and determine the destiny of its department." It was the prototype of similar demands in one school after another last year. Such a department was the academic equivalent of a state-within-a-state, in this case an all-black academic state within all-white or virtually all-white schools.

Nothing is more revelatory of this fantasy-nationalism. It demands all the trappings of "self-determination," except the ability to pay for itself. Yet the more deeply it penetrates into white academic territory, the more profoundly it withdraws into itself. It wants sovereignty, but a subsidized sovereignty. It seeks to develop the rudiments of a new black nation, but merely succeeds in producing a new form of a black ghetto. It cannot break the umbilical cord with the white world, and it cannot live harmoniously within that world.

BY NO MEANS do I wish to challenge the validity and necessity of Black Studies. The more we know about "black history," "black literature," or "black sociology," the better it will be for all of us. The real question is whether they should be studied and taught the way other subjects are studied and taught, as a collective educational enterprise, or whether they should be studied and taught with a built-in nationalist mystique outside the bounds of rational discourse and authentic scholarship. By Black Studies, I mean nothing more than the history of black people or the sociology of black communities, not a "black history" or "black sociology" so different in kind that only blacks can understand or use them. This nationalist bias invariably leads to the insistence that Black Studies must be organized into a self-governing, all-black department from which white students may even be excluded. Whether a department or an interdepartmental program is better for these studies is, to my mind, not the main point, though departments lend themselves to autonomy far more than interdepartmental programs. The crucial question is whether the Black Studies set-up should imply that blacks and whites in the United States belong to two different nations, one long established, the other striving to be born, and that

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they should treat each other as such in universities, trade unions, and ultimately everywhere else. The set-up is, therefore, tremendously important to black nationalists, who demand departments that could act as if they were ersatz foreign institutions with extraterritorial rights.

The nationalist case for Black Studies in white schools is marked by a curious contradiction. According to the nationalist party line, all whites are hopelessly racist, white schools merely mirror a racist society, "white culture" is not "relevant" to the "black experience," and separatism is the only way out. If so, it may be asked, what are Black Studies doing in white schools? The answer is that black nationalists do not really want them to be part of those schools; they want to recreate black schools in, but not of, white schools. It is important to recognize that the case for Black Studies is not the same as the case for Black Schools of Black Studies. The case for Black Studies rests on the intrinsic validity and significance of the subject matter; the case for Black Schools of Black Studies is less concerned with white schools than with white money. In the end, a marriage of convenience will benefit neither the white school nor Black Studies. A set-up which exacerbates existing differences and antagonisms could in the long run set back Black Studies for a generation.

In a symposium held at Yale University two years ago, the record of which was recently published, one black sociologist argued: "If there are black people in this society that live in segregated institutions, that's exactly what you have to create on the university campus."* Apart from all other considerations, why go to all that trouble when there are already so many segregated black institutions in this country? What is the point of getting physically closer together in order to get psychologically farther apart? I have no doubt that Black Studies in hitherto white schools are fully justified and long overdue—but only if they lessen the gap between whites and blacks, help break down the walls of prejudice and ignorance, give each the benefit of the other. In the interest of the entire society, white students need Black Studies as much as or even more than black students. "Black" should refer to what is being studied, not who is studying and who is teaching.

Thus far we have been thinking in terms of blacks and whites. But we must also think of Black Studies in terms of blacks and blacks. The idea of Black Studies by and for blacks only tends to assume that there is something in the nature of a monolithic black consciousness which can or will express itself in these studies. This is by no means the case. Blacks differ among themselves as much as they may differ with whites; the extreme nationalist tendency is only one of many, and the nationalists are far from united on what they should stand for. The problem then becomes: which blacks are going to decide what Black Studies should be? The politicalization of Black Studies almost fatally makes them a battleground for rival black movements and ideologies. "Battleground" here is no mere metaphor. The struggle for control of the Afro-American Studies Center at the University of California at Los Angeles went so far that two Black Panther leaders who were also students at UCLA were shot to death on January 17, 1969, in the university's Campbell Hall. They were Alprentice "Bunchy" Carter, Deputy Minister of Defense, and John Jerome Huggins, Deputy Minister of Information, for Southern California. The murders were ascribed to a rival nationalist outfit headed by "Maulana" Ron Karenga (born Ronald Everett) who founded the organization US (as opposed to "them") in 1965. Information from the Panthers led to the indictment of five US members. The Panthers have vowed vengeance, but Karenga has so far eluded them (Karenga means "keeper of the tradition" and "Maulana" is an honorific title in Swahili). Karenga represents to the Panthers the most dangerous of the pseudo-African "cultural nationalists," and their enmity could make a shambles of the Afro-American Studies Center even if the directorship were not so lucrative and Panther blood had not been shed.

THOSE who do not understand the nationalist fantasy are bound to get hurt, as even the presumably more knowledgeable white New Left sponsors of the New Politics Conference in Chicago discovered two years ago. This conference was set up to work out a New Left strategy for the 1968 Presidential elections. It was attended by about 2,500 delegates, of whom about one-tenth were black. The latter formed a Black Caucus which proceeded to deliver ultimata to the entire conference in which they hardly deigned to take part. First they made two peremptory demands with a time limit for acceptance—that the Black Caucus should be given representation equal to all the whites on the steering and other committees, and that the convention should adopt a 13-point program reflecting "black revolutionary consciousness." After much tormented oratory, the convention capitulated to both demands by a vote of nearly three to one. This demonstration of "liberal sincerity" was thereupon further tested by a third demand, going still further, that the Black Caucus be given conference votes equal to that of the entire white majority. After even more tormented oratory, the third ultimatum was accepted by more than two to one. The conference thereupon sealed its fate and came to a sad, bitter, demoralized end. The larger New Left has not yet recovered from this fiasco.

One white sponsor of the organization, who in the end rebelled against the Black Caucus's tac-

* *Black Studies in the University: A Symposium* (Yale University Press, 1969), pp. 72-73 (Gerald A. McWorter).

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tics, wrote that the Thirteen Points were "incredible" and the will of the Black Caucus was "irrational." They were, to be sure, "incredible" and "irrational" to him and others in his painfully awkward position. But a black nationalist could make them credible and rational. "When the representatives of two nations sit down to negotiate their common or conflicting interests, they meet as equals and the guiding principle is 'One nation, one vote,'" expounded Eldridge Cleaver in the November 1967 issue of *Ramparts*. "Seen in this light, the demand of the Black Caucus at Chicago for 50 per cent of the votes is only an assertion of equal national status." He did not bother to explain how the Black Caucus came to represent the black nation or the white delegates the white nation. It was enough that blacks were in a position to make take-it-or-leave-it demands on whites; this parody of national "negotiations" was worthy of a fantasy-nationalism which is capable neither of representing a real nation nor of conducting real negotiations.

The Cornell incident ended much the same way. After a two-day sit-in, a high university official and a black student leader signed a written agreement to the effect that the university accepted all the black students' demands. Here again the roles were largely symbolic and the substance of the demands was less important than the ceremony. The incident demonstrated that a few black students with guns can suddenly see themselves as representing the "black revolution" or the "black nation," even if no one really represented anything on that occasion, as the university official soon found out.

IN FACT, from one point of view, it would be much easier and simpler if there were such a thing as a "black colony" or a "black nation" in the United States. At least it would clearly define the problem and clearly point to its solution. Perhaps the most difficult and baffling aspect of the American Negro problem is that it has no such clarity and no such definition. The black "land question" is made up of enclaves and ghettos, which can only rhetorically be called a nation or nations.* As soon as the term "colonialism" is applied to the American Negro experience, it is necessary to add the qualifier, "a special variety," the variety being so special that it admittedly lacks a colonial territory or economy.† When "nation" and "colony" are used so loosely to cover so much ground, they raise more questions than they answer, lose all the sharpness and force of their traditional meaning, or else say one thing and mean another.

A starting point may be the frank recognition that it is easier to say what the American Negro is not than what he is. If he does not constitute a nation of the Third World type, is he merely another one of America's well-known ethnic groups, such as the Irish, the Italian, or the Jewish? The ethnic label also strikes me as unsatisfactory and misleading. While the national concept goes too far, the ethnic concept does not go far enough. No ethnic group in American history has encountered degradation and discrimination so rigid and so lasting as those established by the color line. While the ethnic ghettos have decreased or disappeared, Negro ghettos have enormously increased and enlarged. Indeed, it is the specific and intransigent character of the Negro problem that has given rise to the black nationalism we have been considering. Our ethnic groups gladly left another nationalism behind them; only the Negro has had to invent a spurious nationalism here to cope with his extraordinary condition.

Are the Negroes a "race"? The term is generally used, for want of something better, despite its dubious biological connotations. "Class" is not much more exact or useful because the Negro problem cuts across class lines. Gunnar Myrdal and his associates did not even bother to consider whether the American Negroes constituted a nation, and they found fault with "minority group" (the equivalent of ethnic group), "race," and "class." In the end, they preferred the term "caste" as coming closest to the American reality. The determining factor in this "caste line" was the "color line," which by its very nature could not be breached the way ethnic disabilities have been overcome. In one of his most challenging insights, Myrdal struck at the primitive source of the problem: "Should America wake up one morning with all knowledge about the African ancestry of part of its population and all the outward physical characteristics of the Negro people eradicated, but no change in their mental or moral characteristics, nothing we know about this group and other population groups in America would lead us to believe that the American Negro would not rapidly come to fit in as a well-adjusted ordinary American." In this sense, as he said, it is "a white man's problem."

This is not the place to try to settle this issue, even if it were within my capabilities. What strikes me most of all, however, is the many-sided specificity of the American Negro problem. It breaks out of one conceptual compartment after another and yet defies a synthesis of all of them. The Negro group is a "minority"—but it is unlike all other minority groups. It is a "class" for the vast majority of its members—but it extends beyond the class line. It has some likeness to a "caste"—but the basis of this caste—color—strik-

* One writer in the black nationalist monthly, *Liberator*, recently referred to the "enclaves of Black Power like Lowndes County" and the "Black Power bases in the Northern ghettos" as "Black nations" (June 1969, p. 10). The plural suggests how confused and confusing the terminology has become.

† J. H. O'Dell, "A Special Variety of Colonialism." *Freedomways*, Winter 1967, pp. 7-9.

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ingly differentiates it from the classical Indian caste system. The only thing to do with such a phenomenon is to see it for itself and not to make it something else. American history, especially the appallingly incompatible heritage of slavery and democracy, the distribution of population, the ever more interdependent and interlocking economy, are among the circumstances which have molded the American Negro problem in ways that are both like and unlike any other. The colonial or national metaphor may be mistaken, but it evokes enough of the reality to be persuasive to those who are desperately looking for a quick answer. If fantasy is a substitute for reality, then the fantasy of black nationalism should help us to understand better the reality for which it is a substitute.

The cost of misunderstanding has become catastrophic. That black nationalism may not be the answer does not mean the present system can continue in the same old way. It must adapt itself to the new conditions brought about by the failure to wipe out the old ghettos which, instead, have spawned more and greater ghettos. The black rural enclaves and urban ghettos cannot create a new nation, but they can attempt to form a new type of "local political community," as Professor Kennan has suggested. What it is going to be can only be dimly perceived at present. But of one thing we may be sure. As long as America permits black enclaves and ghettos, it cannot deny them representation of their own choosing—and remain true to itself or even avoid a conflagration. The democratic process itself must bring about far-reaching change in the relations of blacks and whites. Only political double bookkeeping and the most outrageous inequities prevented such change earlier. The critical problem at this stage is whether the new political communities, whatever they may be, will relate more or less realistically to the rest of the country or whether they will be infected with the nationalist fantasy and encourage a destructive—and self-destructive—separatism from the rest of the country. Once the fantasy sets in, no arrangement, however well-meaning, is workable. Whatever the road ahead, it can scarcely fail to be a hard one, full of bumps and sharp turns, threatening to many existing vested interests. But if the democratic road is blocked, the nationalist fantasy will loom larger and larger, even if it can destroy far more than it can create. There has been a white fantasy to get rid of blacks, and a black fantasy to get rid of whites. After more than two centuries, it is high time for both whites and blacks to get rid of their fantasies instead of each other.

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Goodbye to Poland

Gabriel Meretik

I DECIDED to leave. Of course, that decision was made not all at once but a little at a time; it was the product of innumerable insignificant details, a gradual sliding that resulted from the games of hide-and-seek that I played with myself. But this time it's final: I'm on my way to the Dutch embassy.

As I walk along Marszakowska Street towards Unii Lubelskiej Square, I keep wondering if it's obvious. I stare at the passers-by in an effort to find out if they recognize me, if they know that I'm a Jew who has decided to get out. No, it didn't seem to be apparent yet. Perhaps that was because I hadn't decided completely yet, perhaps at that point I still believed in miracles, still believed that I would awake from this nightmare, that Gomulka would be removed—how can I say now what I was thinking then? All along the way I continued asking myself questions. Am I a coward for submitting to this, for asking permission to leave? Am I not betraying my friends, who want to continue the struggle? By asking for an emigration visa to Israel, am I not aligning myself with the Zionists? By agreeing to go through official channels, am I not placing myself on the side of people of whom I disapprove? And will it not seem that I am embracing their convictions, condoning their past actions?

I remember my first reaction to the speech Gomulka delivered on March 19, 1968 in the Congress Hall. When I saw those thousands of people jeering, whistling, screaming out their hatred of "Zionists," booing Gomulka because he seemed too soft for them; and when, as Gomulka divided the Jews into three categories and announced that the authorities would permit those who expressed the desire to leave to do so, I heard the whole room chanting "Let them get out today, today!"—at that moment I vowed to myself that I would never agree to give them that pleasure.

And now here I am, determined to leave. Oddly enough, the fact that I've capitulated doesn't trouble me especially, and I'm frankly more curious than anxious about what will happen next. Here I am at Rakowiecka Street. Suddenly fear seizes my guts; the Dutch embassy is located exactly opposite the Ministry of the Interior. I had thought that going to give my name at the embassy would be a simple formality. Now I realize that this first step is in fact decisive, and that it won't be possible for me to turn back now. I imagine, no, I see, behind one of those windows a nameless agent clicking the shutter of his camera as I make my way stealthily up the little staircase that leads to the offices concerned with consular affairs. I have been placed on file, catalogued, classified, betrayed, found out. Before I came up those stairs, I was a Pole like any other, even though some people knew I was a Polish citizen of Jewish nationality. (Official terminology in Poland makes a distinction between "nationality"—which is taken to mean ethnic origin—and "citizenship": but whenever I had occasion to fill out questionnaires, next to "nationality" I wrote "Polish" and no clerk ever said a word to me about it.) Now here I am not only on file but—as if that weren't bad enough—placed in the worst of categories, that of Zionist. Well, that's that! With a determined step I walk into the waiting room of the embassy.

There are two lines, or rather, two ways visitors may go. A window marked "Visas for Holland" and a sign which reads "No Admittance." I can guess (probably everyone can) which way leads to the "office in question."

I enter and see a veritable recapitulation of the whole latter-day history of the Jews in Poland. There is the Party militant, one of those women referred to as "aunts of the revolution," one who's been through it all, jails run by Polish colonels before the war, then the prisons of Moscow, or the French or Belgian or German camps: one of those women who are currently being let go, kicked out of that same Party to which they have sacrificed everything.

There are a few students, blond, the kind to whom the word "Jew" means nothing, or if anything is just a synonym for "conservative"; the kind, perhaps, whose parents told them a few days ago that they were Jewish, told them the way one tells people that they have cancer or

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smallpox; the kind who, after a moment of incredulity, decided to make a display of their origins, who now devoured whatever they could find about the history of the Jews and who had decided to go to Israel.

And there are some artisans from the provinces. Where they came from they were the only Jews in a one-hundred mile area, and they had just been laid off work, excluded from the Party or summoned to the police station, where they had been accused of fomenting Zionist plots and conspiracies. At one time these artisans had believed they could escape their fate by blending into the population, and although they still spoke Polish with a Yiddish accent they were very proud of having sent their children to the public high school, then on to the university.

And also waiting here are a number of civil servants, easily recognizable because each carries a copy of *Trybuna Ludu*—the official organ of the Party—under his arm. Seeing everything come crashing down around them, finding themselves, overnight, without work, without friends, and without hope, they decided abruptly to start from scratch, to begin their lives all over again in Israel, in that country where Zionism serves as ideology: that same Zionism which they have been fighting all their lives.

And there are also several "operators." They have always been able to take care of themselves and for them the idea of leaving isn't troubling in the least; they're already exchanging tips. ("In Vienna, you know, you've got to get in touch with So-and-so. And listen, don't, under any circumstances, give your travel permit to an agent, because if you do you're screwed, you'll wind up in Israel. If you can, get to New York: there are organizations there which. . . .") They regard the people around them with a somewhat ironic expression, especially those people who are talking about what awaits them in Israel.

And yet there is clearly something that makes all these people feel united: despite their differences of extraction, class, and motivation, they all examine each new arrival with the same inquisitorial eye. They scrutinize him silently and then, depending on who he is—or isn't—they either accept him into the group or send him over to the "Visas for Holland" window.

For three hours I await my turn, all the time feeling a strange tingling sensation at the bottom of my heart.

MY TURN. I rush headlong through the doorway. On the other side, a corridor. I enter a tiny room. Two desks. Behind the one on the left sits a woman with graying hair; behind the one on the right, the one nearest the door, a plumpish man with a worn-out look and a sympathetic moustache. I explain the purpose of my visit to him. I would like to leave the country. No reaction on his part. He picks up a form and asks me a few questions: last name, first name, last name and first names of parents, are they still living and if so where, do I have any relatives in Israel, any friends, what is my profession?

That's all. In two weeks I will be receiving assurance of a visa, at home, by registered mail. When I have received that assurance I must make an appearance at police headquarters, that is where I have to go to obtain the necessary visas and ticket, and that will be all, sir, if you need anything further please drop by and see us, we are at your service, thank you, thank you, so long now. . . .

I leave the office and walk through the waiting room. On my way out I mumble a polite thank-you but nothing else and here I am again on the street. I glance over at the Ministry. Screw them!

Okay, that's that. Too late to turn back now. I'm going to get plastered.

I'm going to get plastered like a Pole—or rather, like a Polish citizen of Jewish nationality. And just to prove my resolve I hurry over to the State department store, where—for a price—one may obtain a bottle of Pejsachowka, that prune brandy which the Jews drank during Passover before the war and which Poland currently exports to the United States, each bottle bearing a little sticker with the signature of a rabbi from Wroclaw.

I go home by taxi: the hell with being miserly. For the moment I don't want to think about all the expenses in store for me; I don't want to think about what's going to happen when I find myself out of work, when I get tossed out of my apartment because I've decided to leave. I'm beginning to feel sorry for myself, for my friends, for Poland, for this bitch of a life. . . .

Pejsachowka is one-hundred-forty proof. Consequently, at the end of an hour I feel sufficiently in form to announce the step I've just taken to my wife. She kisses me. *She* isn't Jewish—she doesn't feel what I feel. She couldn't. Of course, she's been pushing me to leave for a long time—she wanted the two of us to leave. Even before "the events of March," before Gomulka's speech and the campaign in the press which touched off student demonstrations the following day. She asks me for a large glass of vodka. We drink. We don't say anything. Then we put on a record. It's a record of Jewish religious music which we bought two day ago at the Czechoslovak Cultural Center. The Czechs had taken out their entire stock of old Hebrew and Yiddish records again: the word travelled fast in Warsaw and everyone who had been feeling, well, concerned ever since the events of March rushed over to buy a few. Not only Jews, mind you. A lot of Poles, too. It's kind of funny: I never spoke Yiddish in my life, I never felt Jewish, and yet today, listening to *El Mole Rachamim* sung

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by three cantors who were survivors of the concentration camps, I felt moved. What asses we are capable of making of ourselves. If we hadn't been so drunk I'm sure we would have roared with laughter at that record.

The next day we both wake up with awful hangovers. At first I wonder what has happened; then I remember our decision. We were going to work as if nothing had changed—easier said than done. I am consumed by the desire to let my fellow-workers in on everything, to ask their advice or simply to throw it in their faces: "I'm getting out." Just the idea of this latter possibility fills me with joy. But my wife and I have agreed not to say anything until we have received assurance of a visa from the Dutch. Not a word to anyone. Out of fear? No, just so as not to tempt fate.

* * * *

ONE DAY when I come home from work around four o'clock I open my mailbox and find a plain brown envelope, registered mail, with no return address. What charming discretion! It is the promise of a visa we've been waiting for. My God! This time it's really happening. I wait for my wife, who's working late tonight. It's not until almost ten o'clock that I tell her the news. We cancel all our plans for tomorrow. Now matters have become serious: every day, every minute is precious. There are so many things left to do. First of all, go to the headquarters of the military police in Warsaw, then to the passport office in the Mostowskich palace, to pick up all the proper forms. I'm the one who'll take care of that.

Ten a.m. The corridor of the passport office is packed. Just out of curiosity I look around to see if I can spot anyone who's going where I am. I see a few people: their features tell me, as well as a certain indefinable combination of fright and superiority in their expressions. I go over to the information window. "Two application forms, please." (Whenever a Pole wants to travel out of the country he has to request a passport—a request which is not always granted.)

"To travel where?"

I think for a minute—no, not really: I hesitate, I'm ashamed, I'm afraid.

"To Israel . . . to emigrate."

I spit it out, crimson with shame. But then I feel relieved. The girl at the window doesn't bat an eye. She hands me two questionnaires and two application forms.

"Fill out these questionnaires just as you would for any ordinary departure. As for the two application forms, they must accompany your formal request addressed to the Council of State asking that your Polish nationality be declared forfeited: just fill them out completely and attach them to your written requests. In addition, you will need an affidavit attesting to the fact that you have no debts to the State. . . . And another certifying that you pledge to leave your apartment to the city. . . ."

My mind wanders as I listen to her. It's been a long time since I knew what the procedure was for leaving the country, a long time since my friends explained to me how many certificates, affidavits, requests, questionnaires, forms I have to file with "the proper authorities."

I leave, carrying those four pieces of paper on which our future depends. I look them over. The questionnaire seems quite ordinary, actually; the application form, however, is extremely brief. "I, the undersigned _____, by reason of my permanent departure for _____, request that my Polish nationality be declared forfeited. Warsaw, the _____ day of _____, _____."

We spend all evening filling out our questionnaires. I hesitate once for a moment when I see the rubric "nationality." Ordinarily, of course, I would write "Polish." But friends of ours who have already left have warned us that when the clerk in the passport office sees the word "Polish" written in that blank he forces people to cross it out and write in "Jewish." And since anyone who wants to go to Israel has to go through the same office in Warsaw, and has to deal with the same clerk, there's not much point in having any illusions on that score. Besides, one must learn to accept one's responsibilities.

DURING the days that follow, while we both continue working, we manage to collect the necessary forms and affidavits. At first, when I go for instance to the People's Council in the area to request a certificate indicating that I owe no back taxes, I blush again when the clerk asks me why I want it. But as time goes by, as I make the bureaucratic rounds, that feeling of embarrassment and shame disappears (besides, I would have had a hard time providing *evidence* for its existence).

After a few days I appear at the local military command office. A very pretty girl lets me in. With a smile, she asks what she can do for me. I smile back and tell her that I need permission to leave the country. Certainly. She winks and hands me a form to fill out. I fill it out. In the blank next to "destination" I write "Israel." I hand the form back to her. She looks it over and her smile disappears. Erased. Now she looks disappointed, as if she had been deceived. Pity; she really wasn't bad. . . .

Two weeks later we have all the necessary documents. Now the chief thing remains to be done: we have to have our application forms signed by our employers. We haven't told them yet that we've decided to leave.

* * * *

I ASK to see my boss. He hasn't had this job for very long: he replaced my former boss, who was

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dismissed right after the events of March. Need I say that my former boss was Jewish, that he had been a member of the Party for thirty years, that he had paid his dues in Spain and in the jails of Poland before the war, that during the war he had lost his entire family—and that now he had been excluded from the Party by the "young wolves," not one of whom had been in the Party for more than ten years but not one of whom was Jewish?

But up until now my present boss had not impressed me as especially committed to the anti-Zionist campaign. Obviously it is thanks to his connections with the Moczar people that he got this job, but he seems to fall into that category of individuals referred to in Warsaw these days as "nice guys"—that is, they won't hurt the Jews if no one orders them to.

He sees me right away. Good firm handshake. "Good morning, good morning, how are you?"

"Okay, thanks—or rather, no, not okay."

"What's wrong?"

"Everything. I've decided to go to Israel."

"What?" He seems so surprised that I'm almost ready to believe he doesn't know I'm Jewish.

"Yes, I'm up to here with what's been happening. I'm sick of seeing those placards on television every day: *Yids Go Home to Dayan*. I'm fed up with reading anti-Zionist articles, and I don't want to live as a second-class citizen."

"But listen, all this will pass. There have been a few mistakes—but you know that can happen sometimes. And besides, nobody's pointing the finger at *you*. No one's accusing *you* of anything."

We talk for twenty minutes. He seems rather troubled, but he doesn't want to acknowledge that I'm right. Still, every now and then I sense that he's giving in, and he's unable to come up with a reply when I remind him of a speech given by the Party first secretary in our own establishment, in the course of which the secretary stated that the approximately thirty thousand Jews who lived in Poland constituted a serious threat to the Polish people, just as two million Israelis constituted a threat to the Arabs.

Ah, if only his damned office wasn't bugged, then perhaps I would find out what he really thinks. But as it is, all he can manage to say to me finally is that he regrets my departure and wishes me good luck.

Just as I'm going through the door he tells me that for the time being I can continue working, at least until the heads of the main office have pronounced on my fate.

I return home, relatively satisfied with myself. I'm curious to know how things went for my wife. She's already there, on the verge of tears. She tells me what happened.

As soon as she arrived at work she had gone to see her boss. She had informed him of her decision to leave. For ten minutes he had looked at her without saying a word. In order to break this awkward silence she had begun to explain her reason for leaving. He had interrupted her by pointing out that all that had absolutely nothing to do with her (meaning that she wasn't Jewish). He had also told her that she would never be able to return and work as a journalist again in Poland. At which point she had observed that if she ever were to return to Poland it would be because things had changed, and in that case she would certainly be able to work as a journalist again.

And that was all? No, not completely. A half-hour later her boss had told her that she was fired, effective immediately.

My wife had been working in the same place for eight years. She had a lot of friends there. Or so, at least, she thought: because within the space of a few hours a void descended around her. And when, the following day, I appear at her office to make the final arrangements for her departure, I am taken over to one side by her fellow-workers, who say to me, *verbatim*: "If *you* want to leave, leave, but let her stay—after all, *she's* Polish."

* * * *

THE NEXT day is a big one. We go to file our applications at Warsaw military headquarters. We don't have to wait too long—about an hour; then we go in together. A desk, a round table, a steel cabinet, and a civil servant in his forties. We hand him our applications. He checks to see that all the accompanying documents are properly attached, then he asks us if we are Party members.

"No."

He asks my wife whether she is aware of the situation of Polish women who have married Jewish men and gone to Israel. She answers that she is. He asks her to make out a written declaration to that effect and tells her what to write:

"I, the undersigned _____, declare that I am aware of the situation of mixed couples in Israel. . . ."

Without even cracking a smile my wife copies out what he dictates and then signs it. A few months ago every Polish applicant had to sign a statement that he had seen a television program devoted to the tragic lot of Poles in Israel (racial persecution, isolation, insults, beatings, etc.).

We walk out onto the street. Instinctively, we take each other's hand: we've just taken another step.

Now there is no longer any reason to conceal our decision from our friends. We expect a reply within a few weeks, or two months at the latest. We divide up the work left to be done. My wife will take care of sorting out all our personal effects, making up the list of books (in triplicate, each copy containing the publisher, date and place of publication of each book), and—most important—the list of things that we want to take out of the country (also in triplicate). As for

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me, I'll collect all the necessary authorizations and take care of all the formalities. Up until this point most of the people who have left have received their travel permits. Once the permit was received one had, on the average, about three weeks to get out of Polish territory, which means that one had to hurry.

But before I do anything else I immerse myself in the study of official government publications, to find out what I can take with me and what regulations cover it. For books published before 1945, the permission of the National Library is required. For works of art the permission of the Commissioner of Monuments of Warsaw. I am refused permission to take a French edition of a book of Mussolini's out of Poland. The Commissioner is stricter: he prevents me from taking out a not very valuable icon (but I had been warned in advance that this would happen) and an African saber that I purchased years ago at a sword exhibition. So after all I don't feel that I've been pushed around too much.

Unfortunately, and I mean unfortunately, I've forgotten about customs.

Alarmed by the rumors that have been circulating around the city, I call up the central customs office to ask if the decree of October 1, 1965 by the minister of Foreign Commerce is still in effect, the decree concerning reduced tariffs and restrictions on imports and exports. "Theoretically," is the reply: that is, customs officials retain the right to decide in each individual case what may and may not be taken out of the country. I am going to learn, at considerable expense, just how great their power is.

For beyond this one declaration there are no rules governing the question. I am therefore reduced to picking up bits of information from people leaving. In this way I find out that taking newspapers out of Poland is forbidden. Similarly, it is forbidden to take out manuscripts, notes, addresses, and letters. One can, it is true, submit such things to the customs officials for approval some time in advance of appearing before them, but the experience of some people I know who have already left causes me to decide against that.

WHAT WITH my job and the things I still have left to take care of—I have to arrange for a French visa because we now intend to go first to Paris—and nights that get more and more sad, more and more wild, nights spent drinking and talking with our friends, time passes quickly. Then all at once it ceases to pass at all. We've been waiting for a reply for two months now and it still hasn't come. The tension in our household is beginning to mount. My wife is heading slowly for a nervous breakdown. She hardly goes out at all anymore. Ever since she announced her decision she hasn't seen her friends from work. Only a few friends have the courage, and it really takes courage, to call her or visit.

We no longer have any money, so we decide to sell our furniture. Then we begin selling our books. We've been waiting for three months now. I'll have to request certain documents all over again, since the old ones have expired by now.

In the meantime, more and more alarming news. "It appears" that one can no longer take foreign currency out of Poland. (Taking out Polish currency is also forbidden.) I check on this and it turns out to be true. Only for Jews, of course: the new ruling does not apply to other persons leaving the country permanently. A few months ago Jews were no longer allowed to buy the five dollars which the State sells to those citizens who are leaving to travel abroad; now they can't even take out money that's been sent to them, or that they've brought back from other countries. We'll be leaving without a cent.

That is, if we can leave at all. Anxiety is really beginning to take hold of us. "They say" that emigration is going to be stopped. "They say" that more and more travel permits are being denied. And if we don't get ours? Without jobs and marked with the infamous sign of the Zionist —we'd rather not even think about it.

* * * *

WE'VE BEEN waiting for almost four months now. Every day I go to the passport bureau on Koszykowa Street. I'm beginning to recognize some of the regular "customers" who come here like me for some news. We exchange our impressions. Sometimes there's good news: "You know So-and-so, who's been waiting for three months?" "Yes?" "Well, his came yesterday." Every day I receive the same answer: "Still no reply."

As soon as I find out that someone I know has received his travel permit (some people get theirs very quickly—especially people with nice apartments), I pounce on whatever bit of news I can get: "Well, how did it go?" I'm particularly interested in details about the customs inspection. It's not that I'm planning to sneak anything out of the country, just that lately the customs officials have been becoming more and more vicious. The incidents of abuse have become more numerous and farcical. For instance, someone finds himself obliged to sew on his sewing machine in front of the jeering customs clerks, just to prove to them that the old Singer that he wants to take to Israel with him is really "professional equipment." And some other friend discovers that he's not allowed to take his son's bicycle along because his son doesn't have a license for it. And when he explains that his wife never permitted the boy to ride the bicycle anywhere but in the courtyard, the chief customs inspector demands that he bring his son so that he can ride the bicycle around the customs area to show that he really knows how to ride a bicycle.

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Books have also been confiscated. I found out that all of Gomulka's works are seized, as well as all the issues of *Nowe Drogi*, the Party's theoretical review. And every once in a while the customs officials just let themselves go. At such times they are inclined to pull the soles and heels off shoes, bore through the legs of furniture, tear the covers off books.

* * * *

JUST BEFORE the Party Congress we went through a long period of apprehension. Many people who had applied for permission to leave the country thought that the Congress was going to suspend emigration. Fortunately, however, the Congress did nothing about it.

But for us the anxiety continues. Are we going or aren't we? I no longer really know whether I want to go. I start to fall back into my old illusions. Gomulka has remained; Moczar seems to have been defeated. Perhaps things will change. And what about my friends? The ones who are staying here; the ones who can't leave because they aren't Jewish. How I envy them. Every now and then I slip into an excess of mysticism. I start carrying on about my Polishness. I go around justifying myself to my friends. I try to figure out how many centuries my ancestors have lived in Poland. I suddenly have a desire to visit my uncle's grave: he's the only member of my family who was buried and not gassed. He's buried at Palmiry, in a wooded area on the outskirts of Warsaw where the Germans murdered several thousand Poles. A friend of mine takes us there by car. I'll never forget that cemetery, those long rows of graves in such an idyllic setting. I walk along trying to make out the inscriptions. From time to time there is a stone displaying the star of David. I go through the whole cemetery from end to end, but his name isn't there. He must be in one of the graves marked "Unknown." All at once, an insane desire takes possession of me: I want to be buried here in this cemetery.

We drive back to Warsaw. All the way back, the road ahead of us is deserted.

* * * *

SEVERAL OF our closest friends leave in rapid succession. We go to the railroad station with them. The train for Vienna leaves at five p.m., but at this time of year it's already dark by then. In the snow the Danzig station takes on a rather ominous aspect, with its long, desolate platforms. A few months ago, when a well-known writer left, one of his friends, slightly pie-eyed, ran up and asked what platform the train for Treblinka left from.

The weather is getting colder and colder. It's a good thing we haven't sold our winter clothes. Then one morning as I'm on my way out of the house I open the mailbox and find the notice we've been waiting for for so long. It's a form letter. "The military command informs citizen _____ that his request for a passport to Israel has been granted." To obtain the necessary travel permit, the applicant must present a certificate from the municipal authorities concerning the return in good order of his apartment, a certificate of employment (or rather, in this case, of unemployment), etc., etc., and 5000 zlotys ($1.00 = 25 zlotys; the average monthly salary is about 2000 zlotys, or $80.)

I expected to jump for joy. Nothing. I just feel tired, very very tired.

THE FINAL lap has begun. We now have three weeks to leave Poland. I have to go and arrange for the customs inspection. The customs official whom I speak to seems nice enough. He asks me my profession, my wife's profession (to determine whether or not we can take a typewriter with us), how many rooms there are in our apartment (we're allowed one rug per room). When I ask him what we are permitted to take with us he answers that the customs bureau will decide. I hand over, for his inspection, a small case containing photographs and papers, as well as a few travel maps and road atlases; as I leave I notice that more than half of these items have been seized.

Next, I hurry over to the City Hall, where I find out that an investigating committee will stop by in a few days to examine my apartment and to determine the cost of renovating it.

The delegation appears: one man and two women. They look the apartment over, measure the wall space, check the condition of the doors, locks, faucets (two of which are leaky: "They'll have to be replaced," one of the women says). As for the renovation of the apartment, we will have to consult an expert about that. Where can we find one? The man in the delegation agrees to get us one. He shows up at our door the next day, this expert. Just a friendly, informal little arrangement. The job, he tells us, is a big one, and just making up an estimate of the things to be done will take a long time. The estimate is drawn up in an hour. In exchange for a sizable consideration he agrees not to bleed us for too much—about 5000 zlotys.

We go and pick up our travel permits: in exchange, we hand over our identity papers. Now we are officially stateless.

My wife finds someone to take care of moving our baggage (a whole little industry has sprung up this way). And as soon as we begin to move, a procession of interested customers appears: "You're moving? Do you want to sell anything?"

I pick up our visas: French, Belgian, and West German. Then I go to buy our railway tickets, which I pay for in cash thanks to our friends in

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France who sent us the money. Up until now you could get the change from the ticket in cash (we have six dollars coming to us) and take it out of the country as pocket money; now not even that money can be taken out. The Minister of Finance made a ruling on the question—applying only to Jews.

Similarly, in the past one could pay in zlotys for the shipment of one trunk as accompanying baggage. That rule is still in effect, but not for Jews. Consequently, we're going to have to come up with about thirty dollars somehow.

* * * *

WE NO longer sleep more than three or four hours a night.

I find out that no family is permitted to take out more than fifty phonograph records: duty must be paid on all records in excess of that number, duty calculated according to the list price of the records when new.

I also learn that one cannot take out more than a total of ten paintings and prints.

It gets colder. The thermometer goes down to fourteen degrees.

We are leaving in a week. I write to all my friends, in France and elsewhere, to let them know. My telephone is no longer working very well. I can't call Paris and when my friends in Paris try to call me they're told that my phone is out of order.

* * * *

THE BIG day arrives. We appear at the customs office. It's nine a.m.; five degrees out. Very early this morning our "shipping agent" came by to pick up our baggage, and he warned us that we were going to have some trouble with our "works of art" and probably also with our books (we had about eight hundred). But despite everything, we were looking forward to this day with a certain confidence.

Two young customs clerks: very "efficient." They decide to begin with the books. They go through them page by page. Every now and then they put one over to one side, on a little table: "Our chief inspectors will decide about that one."

Our works of art (three rather crude paintings and a fourth, unsigned, of no great value) also find their way onto that table. Then three lithographs. Then an icon mounted on plywood, three knives, two ebony elephants, an old clothes iron, a framed reproduction, and other "objects of art" of the same type. And six Nikifor drawings. It's so cold in the little concrete shed where this inspection is taking place that we are literally freezing. Then some laborers come by and offer us a glass of one-hundred-eighty proof alcohol. Fortunately. It can't be any more than ten degrees in here.

We've been here for five hours now and we're still going through the books and little odds and ends. At last the investigating committee arrives: four "high officials." They look over our works of art and our books for a long time. Then they step off to one side; one of the young customs clerks goes with them. Long consultation. The young customs clerk comes back. We may select three paintings and one Nikifor drawing: the rest does not leave Poland. I am stunned. The Commissioner of Monuments gave us permission to take these things out. But these aren't works of art. I try to protest. The young clerk shrugs his shoulders and directs me to his superiors. I feel like crying. And this cold. . . .

We have to come back the next day because there are still a great number of things to be examined (each object is closely scrutinized, the pockets of every article of clothing carefully searched). We immediately go to the apartment of some friends, and there, I explode. As my body gradually regains its normal temperature I begin to feel the effects of this humiliation, of my impotence in front of four petty clerks—who retorted, when we tried to protest their seizure of our belongings, "But you've been living in an art gallery, not a normal house, with all these paintings. . . ."

Yesterday I still had my doubts. I wondered if we were really doing the right thing by leaving. Now I haven't any doubt at all. And I am surprised to discover in myself a feeling very much akin to hatred. For years we've worked like slaves and now they prevent us from taking the few things we have. . . .

All right, that's it: we've taken care of everything. We're leaving tomorrow. Our room is hopelessly empty. We invite a few friends over tonight to have a parting drink with us: sixty people show up. We drink—and talk—until three o'clock in the morning. Some of my wife's friends are in tears. As for us, we hold up all right.

IT'S ELEVEN o'clock. The train for Paris leaves at noon. Some of our friends come by to drive us to the station: Danzig Station, which is fast becoming Farewell Station. It's cold, a couple of degrees below zero, but the sun is shining. We've only reserved two seats, but I've been counting on finding a berth in the Moscow-Paris second-class coach. Unfortunately, the conductor wants too much for it.

So we settle into our compartment. What with our suitcases, flowers, boxes of chocolates, bottles of vodka—all passed through the window by our friends—the compartment soon gets pretty crowded. It's still fearfully cold, and a trainman passing by tells us that the heating system isn't working. We have a twenty-four hour ride ahead of us before we get to Paris. One of our friends brings us a bottle of Russian champagne and two glasses: well, at least that will be well-iced.

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We've only got a few minutes left. We say our last goodbyes. About twenty friends have come to see us off and our departure has been so nerve-wracking so far that I haven't had time to realize that I may never see any of them again. It's only now that we are finally on the train, talking to our friends through the window, that I understand that I am in the process of leaving my country for good.

As the train pulls away, my wife bursts into tears. So do I. We make no effort to hide it. There's no reason to be ashamed. I try to get one last glimpse of the faces of those friends who made it possible for us to hang on till the end, who helped us. And who are staying behind. And as the platform flashes by, as their silhouettes recede further and further into the distance, I suddenly feel that I'm a coward, that I'm running away. I take my wife in my arms. The bouquets of flowers which surround us suggest a burial rather than a send-off for a trip abroad.

For half an hour, we don't say a word.

* * * *

FINALLY, after a series of painful negotiations, the Soviet conductor agrees to sell us two places in the second-class sleeping car—for 500 zlotys each. So we move all our stuff. To kill time—and more than anything else to keep from talking—we start playing cards. Three hours go by. We arrive at Poznań. The customs officials come on board, along with several border guards; the passport inspection begins.

An agent comes through and asks to see our travel permits. He looks them over, checking to see that all the visas are attached; then he hands them back to us. "Dowidzenia," he says: "Goodbye." We cross the border. From then on no one speaks Polish.

Now we are without a country. I open up the bottle of champagne. It isn't very bubbly. Which is understandable. There's no reason it should be.

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In Defense of the 50's

John Mander

AMONG THE YOUNG, the word has got around that the 50's were not a good time to be alive in. Or perhaps one should say—to grow up in. For today's twenty-year-olds were alive and kicking in their diapers, all right, while we were growing up. And they do not let us forget it. After all, while not exactly old enough to be their fathers, we 50-ites are the closest older generation to hand, and the most tempting to kick.

The charges against us are many. We were the *acquiescent* generation. In England, we let the Tories back into power in 1951; and our anger, however vehemently expressed, achieved nothing. In Germany (where, as it happened, I spent a good part of the 50's), we were the generation who acquiesced in the frigidities of the cold war that are now seen to have paralyzed the development of German society and prolonged German disunity. It is almost worse, it seems, to have been a member of this generation than to have belonged to the supinely acquiescent generation of the 30's that put its neck under the Nazi jackboot. In France and Italy, it is no different. The generation that failed to protest the monolithic rule of the *Democrazia Christiana*, allowed itself to become the instrument of imperialism in Vietnam (*that* Vietnam, remember?) and Algeria, and permitted de Gaulle's takeover in 1958, is hardly worthy of respect. And in America? In America we make the poorest showing of all. We let our elders con us into anti-Communism, when there were no Communists around to speak of, but only radicals, whom our elders were anxious—in the most democratic fashion, of course—to emasculate. We did not protest Joe McCarthy. We let Ike in, and kept Adlai out. No wonder nobody under thirty wants to speak to us.

And yet: when we tire of turning a willing ear to those who no longer wish to speak to us, is this a true likeness, we may wonder, of the 1950's, seen with the benefit of a decade's hindsight? There is, of course, a cheap and easy rejoinder to those of our juniors who torment us with the things we did and left undone. It is the counter-jibe that our decade at least did not end with victory for Richard Nixon, some ten million votes for Wallace, a prospective crushing defeat (far worse than in 1959) for the British Labour party, a neo-Nazi party in Germany, chaos in Italy (with the prospect of a coup on the Greek model), and a further weakening of the democratic Left in France. That these sad events (speaking from the standpoint, my own, of the democratic Left) can be put down to a backlash against the left-wing extremism of our juniors is too simple an answer. But the SDS (German or U.S. variety) must surely bear some responsibility for this backlash. Indeed, it is no secret that many of their leaders openly work for it, on much the same grounds that the German Communist party welcomed Hitler's coming to power two generations ago—because a Nazi night must necessarily precede a Communist dawn.

Granted, a generation can no more be decimalized than a historical era can be made to begin or end at the stroke of midnight on the final hour of a century. But it makes at least as good sense to speak of "the 50's" as it does of "the 30's"; and it will be agreed that the 30's—Auden's "dark, dishonest decade"—was a period that will bear exact definition (from the Wall Street crash of 1929 to Hitler's invasion of Poland in September 1939). What were the leading characteristics of the 50's? Let me commit myself to a bold, possibly foolhardy, statement: it was the happiest, most stable, most rational period the Western world has known since 1914. The happiest—with McCarthy and Algeria and Vietnam? The most stable—with a dozen French changes of government in a decade? The most rational—when its rationale consisted in a precarious, and terrifying, balance of power between East and West? How is it possible to reconcile these things?

Let us take them point by point. Algeria and Vietnam were not, of course, the only colonial wars fought by the European powers: the Dutch fought in Indonesia; the British in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus. In each case a compromise was eventually struck: unsatisfactory to the Dutch and the French, rather more satisfactory to the British. But the essential point is that these wars were fought, not at home, but in distant lands: they did not prevent the rise of French, Dutch, or British prosperity in the 50's. And what of the moral aspect? Well, only in France did they lead

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to political disruption and a takeover by the Right. But it is not really possible to speak of these late-colonial conflicts—it is here that the contrast with America's involvement in Vietnam is so striking—without relating them to the general, and by the early 60's almost completed, pattern of European decolonization. Here, surely, the point of no return was the voluntary withdrawal of British power from India in 1947. After that, it was only a matter of time before Britain and her fellow European powers would draw the consequences and grant independence to their remaining colonies. That was the climate of the time and most Europeans (including, certainly, many Frenchmen) acquiesced. It had become, for our generation, a moral commitment. The wars Britain fought were essentially to prevent the takeover of power by neo-totalitarian or terrorist groups (as in Malaya or Kenya); and they were in the main successful (one conspicuous failure, Ghana, was not due to any misuse of force by Britain).

When Suez burst upon us, the moral commitment faced its first test. It may be said to have triumphed in that the open opposition of the Labour party and of liberal elements in Britain would have made speedy withdrawal imperative, even had the U.S. and the UN not acted with such unwonted unanimity. After Suez, in Britain at least, there was no going back on this basic moral commitment of the European 50's. As for the rest of Europe, by the mid-50's decolonization was no longer on the political agenda for Germany or Italy, Scandinavia, Holland, or Greece. Only for Spain (which rapidly made its peace with the Moroccans), Belgium, Portugal, and France did it remain unfinished business. And by 1960 de Gaulle had granted independence to the French Empire and was (as we know now) determined on a similar solution for Algeria.

AT FIRST glance, it may seem extraordinary to pick out the 50's, of all decades, as an oasis of stability and rationality in Western affairs. For most of us, standing on the threshold of the 50's, it would have seemed extraordinary too. The first Berlin crisis was just over, but the fear that the Red Army might overwhelm a still pitifully weak Europe was real enough. In Asia, nobody knew what the rapid conquest of the Chinese mainland by Mao Tse-tung would bode; but neither in divided Korea, nor in Indochina, nor in Burma, could it bode much good. The book of the hour was Orwell's *1984*; and we did not miss Orwell's meaning. Even if the Western world did not succumb to outward conquest by new totalitarian powers, it stood in danger of succumbing from within. Totalitarianism would come to be fought by increasingly totalitarian means. Permanent readiness for atomic war would be the order of the day; and even if war never came, or if things settled down to that condition of "token war" predicted by Orwell, everything the West stood for would slowly be whittled away, until one atomic super-power became internally indistinguishable from the other.

George Orwell, just dead, was our patron-saint. We knew already, from his earlier writings, what Orwell thought of the "socialism" of Stalin's new empire. We now knew the shape of his prediction for our own futures. It was a sick man's vision of what the incipient cold war would be likely to do to the Europe we had fought to save from the Nazis. English Socialism, of which we had had such high hopes, would be reduced to Ingsoc, a mirror image of the tyranny it had set out to oppose. Instead of permanent revolution, what we had to look forward to was permanent warfare —rationing, hate-propaganda, denunciation, mass mobilization. We, in Britain, had had ten years of this kind of thing. America had suffered less directly; most of Europe had suffered on a scale different rather in kind than in degree. What Orwell promised was more, and more, and more of the same. To me, the miracle of the 50's is that it did not happen.

It is no dishonor for a prophet to be so wrong, when his premises and his intentions were so right. What Orwell issued from his death-bed was a cry of warning, terrible but timely. Ironically, it is today's New Left which has adopted his warnings as the truth, which sees no difference in kind between an imperfect democracy in the West and a scarcely-changed, totalitarian autocracy in the East. For his part, Orwell would surely have been delighted to have been proved wrong. Twenty years after his death, of course, it is easy to see what led Orwell to his horrific conclusions. It was not democracy, in the long run, but Orwell himself who inwardly succumbed to the logic of the totalitarians. Nor is it difficult to see why. Orwell was a man of his time. Too young to have known the "long summer afternoon" of the Edwardian peace, he grew up during the Armageddon of 1914-18. Like so many others, after the war he might have chosen to re-enact that Edwardian harmony, to return to "normalcy"; but, perhaps perversely, he did not. An Etonian, he did not go to Oxford or Cambridge. He went straight from school into the Burma Police, thus becoming a willing, if irritant, cog in what was still the most powerful empire of the age. He did not like what he saw, and recorded his dislike in *Burmese Days*. Later he was to suffer—still voluntarily—the miseries of the down and out in Paris and London. He now knew what society looked like from the bottom.

By 1936, Orwell had met Communists and rejected their creed; but he was still a revolutionary and joined the "Trotskyite" POUM in Barcelona. From his time in Spain (he received a severe neck wound in a fascist attack) he had learned enough of the true nature of both fascism and

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Communism to last a lifetime (his anarchist and POUM friends were ruthlessly suppressed in the spring of 1937). It is clear that from that moment he saw them as the Tweedledum and Tweedledee of the international scene. The triumph of either would be a disaster, and a disaster of much the same kind. By the summer of 1940, the disaster had occurred: all Europe lay under the totalitarian heel. It was at this moment of agony that Orwell wrote the essays "England, Your England," which bore witness to his belief that if it "had not happened here"—and here Orwell was in the tradition of Burke and Wordsworth—it was in part due to the character of the English people.

Orwell was never ashamed to call himself a patriot, and his patriotism had a distinct political content. Yet by 1949 little of his defiant optimism remained. Why was this? There is no avoiding, I suppose, the fact that English patriotism (like most other patriotisms) is a jealous god. To say that England stood alone as the bastion of liberty was very nearly to imply that all other nations, by not resisting successfully, had revealed their inner rottenness. This, of course, is exactly what the British people *did* think in 1940 about France (which had resisted, but not successfully) and about America (which had not so far resisted at all). Where America is concerned, it seems pretty clear that Orwell shared much of the ignorance and contempt of his contemporaries. It also seems unlikely that he had fundamentally altered his views by the time of his death. To most of us, in the 50's, this must have seemed a blind spot, since it was undeniably American power that had liberated Western Europe and blocked the path of Communist expansion in Berlin, Greece, and Korea. Far stranger, surely, is the decline of Orwell's former faith in the libertarian instincts of the English people, which he had praised so affectionately and so unrhetorically in the dark days of 1940. But Orwell, we have to remember, had experienced in his own flesh three types of authoritarian rule: and one of these was that of the British Raj.

To an anarchist-socialist like Orwell the triumph of British and Allied arms bore therefore a double aspect. This was a triumph over fascism, but it was at the same time a reinstatement of the status quo: and that, in Britain, meant not only the class system, but that imperialism for which Winston Churchill had stood all his life. In 1940 it was the English people that had spoken; by 1945, it was the unregenerate Churchill. Too much a fundamentalist to believe that Labour could radically transform the status quo after 1945, Orwell could have seen in Bevin and Attlee only timid reformists aping their true masters. Bevin, in particular, was the legatee of Churchill's fears at Yalta; under his leadership, Britain was more militantly anti-Communist than America. Orwell, too, was anti-Communist. But once again, glimpsed through the curtains, pig and man had become indistinguishable at Animal Farm.

This lack of faith in the ordinary people of his country (not to speak of kindred countries) in his last days seems to me a crucial point. For, if I am right, the tide had begun to turn at the very moment of Orwell's despair. Communism, to be sure, was still in its Stalinist phase and even the limited experiments of a Khrushchev lay well in the future. But its progress, by armed force, had been checked—so successfully, indeed, that twenty years later the frontiers of this totalitarianism Orwell so feared still lie (except in Cuba and Indochina) where they lay in 1949. Fascism, for which many predicted a comeback even after the catastrophe of 1945, survived in the Europe of the 50's essentially as a leftover from the 30's—in Spain and Portugal—and not as a new right-wing reaction to the Communist threat. And as to that British imperialism which Orwell hated—though he would never have equated it with the modern-type totalitarianisms of Left and Right—this too was in a state of rapid dissolution after the granting of independence to India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon in 1947.

IT IS a favorite argument of today's New Left that the Third World can only secure its independence by armed force. Some people, in the 50's, saw it that way too. But if they were a minority—as they certainly were—it was because they knew that the war against fascism had created a mood among the ordinary people of Europe which made intolerable the continued subjection of black man to white. This change of mood, at first strongest among the intelligentsia, then genuinely popular, represented a moral victory of the first order—a victory, essentially, for the teaching of one man: Mahatma Gandhi. If any one man may be called the liberator of the Third World it is surely the man who made the continuance of British rule in India morally repugnant, first to the Indians, then to the English people. Yet it is to a man like Frantz Fanon that a new generation of would-be liberators of the Third World turn. No doubt it is in part the American involvement in Vietnam which has brought about this unfortunate transposition. Unfortunate: for those in the 50's who were working for the liberation of the colonial world could not have failed to recognize in Fanon's glorification of violence a strong echo of that ideology they had been instrumental in destroying in Western Europe. It is only possible that Fanon, generalizing from the case of French Algeria, should now seem to be a natural prophet of Third World liberation because the true history of the 50's is now as distant to today's under-thirties as was the long summer afternoon of the Edwardian peace to those of us who grew up in the 50's. In 1950 Fanonism would have seemed as great a betrayal, as Gandhism seemed a vindica-

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tion, of those values we had thought we were fighting for a decade earlier, and which Orwell had then seen incarnated in the English people, with their decency and their "mild, knobby faces."

But this is perhaps to point to a difference between the generations of '49 and '69 that is fundamental: I mean the presence, and the lack, of a sense of historical perspective. I have said that Orwell was a man of his time. No doubt the same can be said (it is true by definition) of the New Leftist of today. But what is implied is altogether different. When one says that Orwell was a man of his time one implies that he bore the imprint of the history of the three decades of violence to which he had been witness. But the same would have been true of the rawest freshman of the class of '49. He might not have fought in the war, or gotten to know imperialism at first hand, or suffered under fascism or Communism; but he would have known what the words meant. Their reality would have been as close to him as to those, like Orwell, who had stood in the fiery furnace.

It is hard to believe that those who had known fascism at first hand, however *enragè*, would have had a good conscience in shouting "fascist" at some university teacher struggling to make himself heard. Yet in West Germany today, as elsewhere, that is now a quite normal occurrence: a recent casualty, indeed, was the Israeli Ambassador himself—he has twice been called a "fascist" and refused a hearing. How, one asks oneself, is such a thing possible—that young German leftists should use precisely the same tactics against a distinguished contemporary Jew as were used by their seniors against Jewish (and liberal and socialist) professors thirty years ago? Have we arrived, in sober fact, at Orwell's projected world of "Newspeak" and "Doublethink"? There are still some years to go before 1984; maybe we shall awaken from the nightmare in time. But it seems undeniable that certain words, whose content was firmly understood twenty years ago, have by now grown so vague as to be meaningless.

It would be different, in a way, if this abuse of language could be put down to malice. Ever since the 30's the Communists had been accustomed to call their opponents fascists and imperialists. In 1950, this was seen for what it was: a crude and malicious manipulation of language for political ends. As a result, one should add, it was singularly ineffective. But malice presupposes a degree of meaningfulness. Language, as Orwell knew, mattered. He foresaw an indefinite prolongation of that era of hate, hunger, and persecution most of the world had known since 1939—if not since 1914. He predicted, logically enough, that to maintain this state of affairs it would be necessary to manipulate language systematically. But the horror, in Orwell's mind, was for real—as, in Vietnam or Biafra, it is today. What Orwell did not foresee was that in the West the terms of political abuse would be devalued, until pseudo-revolutionaries would be assaulting a pseudo-reaction, where his generation had fought with machine-guns against a palpable evil that threatened not only Catalonia, but the whole Western world.

I think this absence of historical perspective, and its concomitant devaluation of the word, would have distressed Orwell greatly. I am quite sure it is these things that distress us, brought up on Orwell, in the emergent generation. Take the bad words—war, hunger, fascism, unemployment, colonialism—and compare the reality of Orwell's formative years with the reality of the 50's (and of today). Contrary to what many of us feared, the 50's brought no Third World War, but rather stalemate, a hardening of spheres of interest which, in Europe at least, put war into a remote category. Despite Hungary, despite Czechoslovakia, that peace still endures. But it escapes today's generation, rightly obsessed with the horrors of Vietnam and Biafra, that they are not confronted, as we were in 1950, with the imminent prospect of a nuclear World War III. As that prospect receded during the 50's, we felt a profound sense of relief. The European peace is now in its third decade, and has fair prospects. In 1950, looking forward, we would have been astounded at our good luck; whatever else it may be, this does not seem to me a grateful generation.

Let us take some more of the bad words—colonialism and fascism. By the end of the 50's most of British and French Africa and Asia was independent (within three years only Portuguese Africa and the Southern Redoubt remained under white rule). Fascism had evaporated (except in Iberia) with breathtaking completeness, and there was no comeback. From being a necessary concomitant of the "final stage of capitalism," fascism had been exposed as a short-lived aberration of the European body politic. In Italy and Germany, the two most affected countries, the new electorate swung to the Right. But anti-Communism this time did not breed (as was implicit in Orwell's testament) a counter-totalitarianism of equal and opposite ferocity. An important factor, I believe, was the sense of security American power gave to a still weak and threatened Europe—a factor that had been lacking after 1919. But it was also, like anti-colonialism, an inner-European process. The intellectuals may have been in the forefront; but, basically, it was a popular revulsion against a form of government that constricted, rather than focused, the energies of a nation, led to war, and intruded intolerably into the private life of the citizen. The era of fascism in European history had lasted scarcely twenty years. In 1950 its return did not seem at all out of the question. By the end of the

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50's it was becoming hard for the young to believe that such a thing could ever have happened in Europe.

But the least predictable turn of events, among the bomb-scarred ruins of 1949, was that by 1959 (not to speak of 1969) Europe and America would be healthier, richer, better housed, better fed than at any time in previous history. Nor was this the by-product of a permanent war-economy (again, an Orwellian prophesy). It was the country that had altogether renounced the production of major armaments—West Germany—that was by 1960 the third industrial power in the world. And the German miracle had by no means been accomplished by a return to the savage conditions of early capitalism. On the contrary, Germany's right-wing coalition under Adenauer, while reinstating a Manchester-style "market economy," had followed British Labour's postwar lead in building up an elaborate welfare state, whose most startling achievement was the absorption of thirteen million homeless refugees into the new economy. And what was true of Germany was no less true of Austria, France, Holland, and the Social-Democratic states of Northern Europe.

No bad word, I suppose, conjures up so vividly the miseries of pre-war America and Europe as "mass-unemployment." Britain's fear, after 1945, was that she might land up with millions of unemployed refugees in her zone of Germany (not to speak of millions at home) whom she would be unable to feed. Yet by the early 50's this had proved a chimera. Not only did Britain enjoy full employment for the first time in generations; the German refugee problem had disappeared as if by magic. By 1960 the labor shortage in industrialized Europe had become so acute that Britain had absorbed some one million colored Commonwealth immigrants, France some one million Algerians, and Germany was soon to pass the two million mark in her mass-employment of Greeks, Turks, Yugoslavs, Spaniards, and South Italians. These latter countries, needless to say, benefited greatly in their turn (ironically, Britain's present color problem dates precisely from her open-handedness in the late 50's). The devastated, Marshall Plan Europe of the late 40's had achieved in ten years a level of productivity and prosperity never before known. Certainly, there was the crazy folly of Suez, the pathos of Hungary, and the threat of the H-bomb, to remind us that we were not, after all, living in the best of all possible worlds. I do not think we were smug: we had Orwell's warnings still ringing in our ears. But we thought that we had something to be grateful for.

WERE THE 50's really a good time to grow up in? They do not look to me, in retrospect, an especially creative time. But that, I daresay, is a different expectation. In Europe, at least, creative periods have too often a way of coinciding with periods of death and destruction. So I, for one, would not be too distressed if the verdict on the 50's was that they were a less unhappy period than the three decades preceding them, even if they produced no Kafka, no Joyce, no Orwell. When I look back at the 50's it is as a spectator. We had none of the sense that our juniors have that the action is where they are. We recognized that the world we were growing into was not of our own making. In that sense, if you will, we *acquiesced*—though no more so than most previous younger generations. It was not that the world our elders had made appeared perfect: by their own confession it was the best of a bad job. We felt anger at the condition to which our fathers and grandfathers had reduced the West. But the mood was emphatically not that of the post-bellum 20's. We were aware that the poisons accumulating in the fabric of Western society during the 19th century—nationalism, the class struggle, colonialism—had somehow been worked out of the system. It had taken two terrible wars to eliminate these poisons. The 20th had proved, as Nietzsche had predicted, the classical century of war.

Yet the antidote had turned out to be remarkably humdrum, after the great and terrible simplifications of the 19th-century prophets. Killing people is bad, it is not liberating. The market square is the proper place for buying and selling, though wise men will see to it that no free-for-all ensues. Governing men of another color (or your own) against their will is not to be advised: liberating those governed unwillingly liberates their governors as well. These simple, almost banal truths are to be found in the *philosophes,* in Jefferson, Kant, or John Stuart Mill, rather than in Marx, Freud, Dostoevsky, or Nietzsche. We were hardly aware, as the 50's grew on us, that we were in fact returning, a little the wiser, to the mainstream of the European tradition. We were certainly too bashful and too unsure of ourselves to make a boast of it. And yet, as the 50's wore on, it came to seem true enough.

THEN WERE the 50's a good time to grow up in? I think that on the whole they were. They were good *Lehrjahre*. We had so much to re-learn that had been deliberately obscured or distorted over half a century. And what we learned to re-learn we came to see to be good. Not the best of all possible worlds, of course. But—to paraphrase what Churchill once said of democracy—what we came to see was that the society our prophetic ancestors so passionately assailed was, indeed, the worst of all possible systems—with the exception, of course, of all the others.

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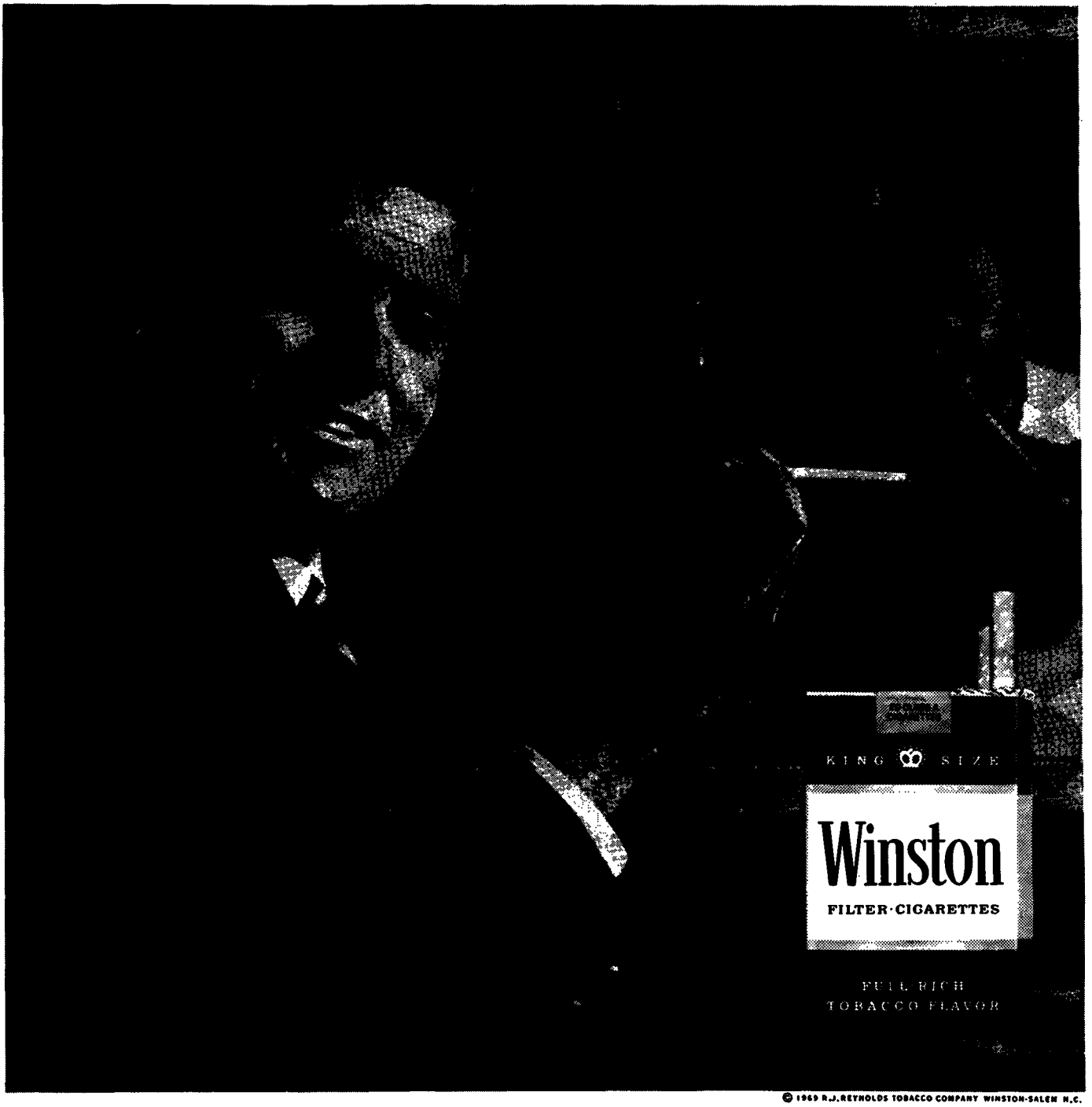
After a corned beef on rye, there's nothing like a Winston!



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"Me and my Winstons"

we got a real good thing...

'cause my Winstons taste good like a cigarette should.

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Decline & Fall of Dingdong-Daddyland

A Story

Nelson Algren

FOLDING a copy of *Playboy* in his left hand while holding his pants up with his right, the old man slipper-sloppered through the old flat dark and narrow—

Don't throw bouquets at me—he cajoled a world that had long dishonored him—

Don't laugh at my jokes too much—he asked a world that had never thought him a comic—

People will think we're in love—although he'd always found people detestable and people had found him a horror.

Coughing, hawking, phlegming, one shoulder higher than the other from working with penitentiary rubber, he lurched lopsidedly with one suspender dragging. Through rooms appointed with fixtures of another day. There were many doors to pass in Dingdong-Daddyland before one reached the kitchen: a kitchen which served as a forge—or a forge that served as a kitchen. Where a pair of sexless wrecks—two long-ruined heroin-heads—were drying contraceptives on a shoe-rack hung above a gas stove.

Odors of paint, paint-cleaner, turpentine, and glue, mixed with that of gas flames burning too evenly. And a reddish dust lay over everything.

Attended by two ancient junkified finks, this kitchen-forge was the capital of a curious kingdom which rose, a long decade past, four stories above the blaze and clang of West Congress Street. And endured, through one whole summer, fall, winter, and spring: then jackhammers began breaking stone a mile away.

Kitchen and kingdom, forge and finks, fell in a single night.

That summer was one of such steady heat that the heroin-heads dried the *Dingdong Daddies* on the back-porch clothesline.

"How much cost your little sausages up there?" a neighbor-woman once called up from the alley. The innocence of the question had made it the family joke of Daddyland.

"How much your little sausages?" the old man now greeted his serfs to ask how they were feeling. "How much your little sausages?" he retorted dryly when Vivi-V tried pumping him about where he hid the heroin with which he paid them.

And, sometimes, when Vivi-V asked it, it meant, "What difference does *anything* make?"

Through a flashflood spring, when pipes backed up, this head—the one who wore specs—threatened the old man with exposure if he didn't increase her morning fixes: then bickered with the other head over who was to put the feathers on the *Ticklish Tessies*. Yet she poured the rubber to fit the forms, stretched the Latex and brushed it with glue; painted the casings and hung them with care.

And dreamed of a huge cache of H hidden somewhere in the walls of the old, dark-walled flat.

They hung *Barney Googles* and *Cupid's Arrows*. They worked with rubber and gas and glue. They soldered bright tufts upon *Feathered Friends*. They painted the casings and burned the culls.

Yet neither went dancing down below.

This curious commune, whose Sovereign Lord was the crazed ex-con calling himself Dingdong Daddy—

I'm a dingdong daddy from Duma
'N you ought to see me do my stuff

—was a single-crop country. The sexless wrecks packaged latex fantasies like cornflakes. While he boxed blue films in his bedroom. And shipped the lot in cartons labelled *Educational Matter*.

Don't-Care girls and Won't-Care girls, Can't-Care girls and Why-Care girls; girls so fresh the dew still lay upon them; others so hardened they looked retreaded; girls from small towns looking flattered and girls from the city looking wronged—all, all had been trapped *flagrante delicto*, to show the world what Dingdong meant when he said: "I know what women do. What they *really* do. What they *really* do."

In Daddyland there was no jazz. There was no music cool nor hot. No Diners' Cards nor income-tax hangups. No one spoke of money and no one spoke of love. Its currency was a fine white dust; and the fine white dust was its one love. Nor did it matter, in Daddyland, whether the world went with a bang or a whimper. The sooner the better was how all Dingdong-Daddylanders felt.

For though Beulah seemed content enough with just enough heroin to keep from getting sick, that Vivi-V was a regular little pig about the stuff. If Beulah let her scrape a couple grains of dust off

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her own deck, that wasn't enough for Vivi-V. No, she wanted to cook herself up a soup-ladle fix that could kill a milkman's horse. (What would kill a horse would never kill Vivi-V.)

Beulah would have liked to find out too. But she let Vivi-V do the searching.

The old man himself had no habit at all. Unless you care to call cartooning an addiction. For, while working with rubber had become his craft, cartooning had become his obsession. A chaplain had given him a child's drawing-book in which he had worked with crayons. Then he had begun tracing comic-strip characters—Barney Google, Moon Mullins, Captain Katzenjammer, and Little Orphan Annie. He'd stuck to it as if he got something out of his crude imitations.

The stuff was brought to him by the Mumbling Man, a piece of psychotic refuse dressed in a dark brown suit a size too large. Whoever he was, whatever he was, he never spoke to anyone but Dingdong—and that only in a side-of-the-mouth mumble. Dingdong would take him into the bedroom and shut the door. A few minutes later the Mumbling Man would shuffle out. Then the women knew they'd have enough H to keep them from getting sick another week.

Once, when Vivi-V had tried to get more out of him by getting too sick to work, he had cut her off altogether.

"No work, no stuff," was how he'd put it, and let her go blind, throwing her arms about and drooling saliva, before he'd bring her back to the world of the living.

"That's the last time she'll try *that*," he'd assured Beulah, and it *had* been the last.

Of these three sixty-year-old juvenile delinquents, the old man alone had had no love life. None at all. Both women had been hookers in their day. But he'd been a virginal youth when he'd become a number; and had come out over the hill.

Those passions which in his youth had burned, though now hardened by rubber and made fast by glue, had yet flickered like smudgefires for four iron decades: and had not yet turned to ash when his parole had come through at last.

He brought out with him a facility for working with rubber, a copy of *Playboy*, and a terrible deprivation of the heart.

Moreover, he brought his walls with him: he could not go down to the street. The years behind bars were done; yet unseen bars remained.

Playboy, to the old man, was the most erotic magazine he'd ever read. No wet sex dream of his adolescence had ever been so sexy nor so wet as the dream this magazine aroused in him. The pages of his ancient copy were warped and stained by the prison hours in which he'd fingered and thumbed them.

Yet the foldout child in the middle was untouched. His eyeballs glanced off nudes. He'd never finished a *Playboy* story. But ah—those ads for color TV, those watches in oyster cases carved out of 18 karat gold—"If you were racing here tomorrow you'd wear a Rolex"; "Creative Playthings—something wonderful stays with your child"; "Are you a member of the Jaeger Club?"; "Days of sun, salt-air, sea—nights beneath the Southern Cross"; "The Escape Game as Played Only on a 27-Day Carnival-in-Rio-Cruise"; "Waiting for your Footprints in the Sands of Kauai Surf"; "What if someone calls you in the middle of the music?" Pause selectors, automatic turntables, Polaroid cameras, cameras guaranteed against focus-drift with both remote and automatic slidechanging—"Sit anywhere near Zenith's unique circle of sounds with exciting Fm/Am/Stereo!"

Oh, to *acquire*, to *get*, to *accumulate*, to *have everything*—that was it: two-door refrigerators, meerschaum pipes, and watches that told the date as well as the hour—*merchandise—that* was what aroused lust in a man! Ashen passions, chilled by the lovelessness of his iron years, were rekindled in dreams of commodities.

For the heart knows its deprivation. And takes its own measures.

"Not a number in the joint but wasn't there on some woman's trickery," Dingdong now accounted for all convictions, federal, state, or municipal, "I *know* what women do. I know what they *really* do."

Of all men on earth, Dingdong alone knew what women *really* do.

How else could the old man think? If women were, actually, man's great blessing—but, no, it had all been too hard to believe *that*. It had all been too long.

Dingdong was one of those extremely rare long-termers capable of making a penitentiary passion come true. His was a latex fantasy of liverish yellow tipped with firehouse red; then tufted by a feather soft as down. In purple gold, or beige. That sold for a dollar each.

And had honored himself by naming it *the Dingdong Daddy*.

Since the world had done him no honor at all.

For he himself had devised the mold whereon Earth's first *Dingdong Daddy* had been forged. *Ticklish Tessies, Feathered Friends, Cupid's Arrows,* and *Barney Googles* were merely variations on the master's grand theme: *The Condom of Tomorrow*.

IN AIR made thick by paint, paint-thinner, and turpentine, Beulah perfected the piece-work; while Vivi-V had to stir the rubber. Because Beulah had seniority.

And, since stirring rubber was no more difficult than stirring oatmeal, and no more interesting, Vivi-V watched Beulah's artistic touch with an envious eye. And Beulah, sensing she was being envied, would take exquisite pains in painting a bulbous nose on a *Barney Google*.

She would step back from her work, her finely-

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tufted brush in hand, cock her head and measure perspectives until Vivi-V could scarcely bear it.

"A condom's a condom," she would comment, "it don't matter *whose* face you paint on it."

Beulah wouldn't so much as glance at her, lest she lose perspective.

"I just don't *know* why I'm so creative," she would marvel aloud, "I suppose it's because I'm a natural-born *specialist*. The layman, of course, doesn't understand these things."

"Oh, specialist my careworn ass," Vivi-V snapped, "as though sticking a feather onto a condom can be considered in the same class as being a *vocalist*."

"I'm sure you sang very well in your day, dear," Beulah assured her, "you could hardly have been sounding like a baby buffalo with an arrow through its lung *all* your life."

"Let me know when you're having an exhibition," Vivi-V asked dryly.

"There's a *trick* to my work," Beulah bragged.

"If there's a trick to it, you're the party to turn it," Vivi-V observed.

A faint flush pleasured Beulah's flesh. Like a touch of pink on broken calcimine.

"That's the nicest thing anyone has said to me in years," she thanked Vivi-V without irony.

Suddenly Vivi-V remembered something: "Once I used to eat bennies like popcorn when you let me hold the bag. Blue-heavens, red-birds, yellow-jackets—I was a barbiturate cat. Nembutol, Luminol, Amytal, Trional, Try'Em-All. I was a goofball cat. Then I hit the *real* thing."

"I *could* have been a typist," Beulah assured herself aloud, "But my fingernails were too long."

"I thought morphine sulphate was the real thing because it had that big *smash*—like your head was coming apart," Vivi-V stopped bobbing her pink bow over the liquid rubber for a moment, "it wasn't the *really* real thing. Not at all."

"I could of been somebody's secretary," Beulah reflected, "but I had all the wrong clothes. I could have been a copper's old lady one time. But I just can't *bear* a nab."

"The *real* thing was nothing but a low, slow glow," Vivi-V remembered her bittersweet sorrow, "like little flowers burning and everyone talking whispery, saying something smooth yet frantic. No bang, no smash, just a leveling off of everything. And when everything is leveled, everything is God. Junk makes a place in your heart you can't ever forget. You *know* you got to give up everything for it. You *know* you have to be punished in the end. It *must* be God—how could anyone find his punishment without it?"

"I *could* have been an airplane stewardess 'n flown around," Beulah decided, "except things were geared one way and I was geared another. I could have had a rich, happy life."

"What good would that have done you?" Vivi-V wanted to know, "if you were dead the whole while?"

"I COULD have been—" Beulah began again, but Vivi-V interrupted her, "When you start hitting toward fifty," she bobbed her pink bow so rapidly that she didn't notice Dingdong standing in the door, "you feel like you want to go down to the graveyard and wait for your Maker beside your stone."

"Had she gone down there when she was sixty-five," the old man announced himself by addressing Beulah, "she would have been waiting for her maker for some time now."

"Goggly-Eye-Owl you!" Vivi-V welcomed him—"*you* don't even have a maker! The warden found you in somebody's pants after they hung him!"

"Never should've hung him," the old man reported, "should've hung you instead."

"*Look* who's talkin'," Vivi-V challenged him directly. "By how far did *you* miss the rope, Goggly-Eye-Owl?"

The old man merely inspected the rack. Sure enough, he found a *Barney-Google* on the topmost rack, reserved for nothing save *Dingdong Daddies*. "Bedbugs won't bite you!" he accused her—and flung it at Vivi-V, who caught it and swung it within an inch of his nose. Beulah stepped between them, took the casing out of Vivi-V's hand and placed it on its proper rack.

"Don't you be so hard on her, you *hear*?" she reproached Dingdong quietly yet firmly. Then, turning on Vivi-V, "And don't *you* be so hard on *him*."

"Put his mind in a cat," Vivi-V told herself softly, "and what you got?" And answered herself just as softly, "a crazy cat, *that's* what."

"Bedbugs don't bite her," the old man repeated.

It was true: Vivi-V had so much heroin in her, bedbugs fled the beds she lay in.

"You make one more funny move around here," the old man issued a final warning, "you're a one-hundred-year-old flapper whose ass is going to be back on the street, ribbon-bow and all!"

"When my ass goes back on the street, Goggly-Eye Owl you," Vivi-V retaliated, "back to the joint *your* ass goes."

"I don't *have* to toss you back on the street," Dingdong changed his mind at the very thought of doing more time. "I can rough you up right *here*!"

"You *try* roughing *me* up," Vivi-V challenged him, "you motherless penitentiary toad from Fink Row, you best get your best hold. You'll never get a second!"

Beulah urged him to the table; where he sat like a huge unclean child with yesterday's eggstain on his chin.

"Wash off the egg," she ordered him.

He rose reluctantly and washed at the sink's single spigot, making the faucet squeal spitefully. Then dried his face on a towel Vivi-V reserved for her own private use. But since neither gesture

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succeeded in irriating Vivi-V, he began banging his baggedy knees together while crisscrossing his palms on them and croaking—

Why don't you do-do-do.
What you done-done-done before

Beulah let him finish Charlestoning. Nor did either woman pay him any heed while he clattered his spoon against the rim of his cup.

Neither paid him the slightest heed. So he crumbled dry bread about the table; then brushed the crumbs, as if accidentally, to the floor.

Yet provoked no reproach.

"I am in the happy position," he announced like a man running for office, "of becoming a living legend in my own time! I have everything I ever wanted! Success in business! Identity as an individual! And the love of many friends."

Then he spat high against the wall and left them alone.

"I've cried till I couldn't cry," Vivi-V remembered, "I've cried till I won't cry again. But when he says that about bedbugs—"

"He don't mean everything he says, dear," Beulah assured her.

"Oh, he means it alright," Vivi-V felt certain; then added, "I could kill him in the alley. I could kill him in the House of God. I could kill him under a Christmas tree. I could kill him in the street. I could kill him in his sleep."

"He *does* have his good side," Beulah yet defended the old man, "he *does* give happiness to people. And he's helping to keep us ahead of the Russians."

"He hasn't done a thing for *me*," Vivi-V complained. And Beulah forebore reminding her that, when Dingdong had taken her off the street, she'd jumped three bail bonds in a month and had a fugitive warrant pursuing her.

As she also forebore reminding the old man that either Vivi-V or herself could put him back in the pen by testifying in court against him.

What deterred her wasn't distaste for playing a treacherous part: treachery was Beulah's trade. "But where would you go then, poor thing?" she'd asked herself more than once. "Where would you score for enough stuff to keep yourself from getting dead-sick on the open street?"

And as for Vivi-V, *she* was such a little pig about the stuff that she wouldn't make it till midnight on the street though she slept all day.

Were they his prisoners or was he theirs?

The lives of all three were in the hands of each.

ONE DEAD of winter dawn Vivi-V dreamed she was standing trial in a courtroom in another town.

"What in God's name is she *on*?" His Honor asked someone unseen.

"Your Honor," she'd heard Beulah's voice defending her, "nobody *knows* what this woman is on."

"What are you on, Sis?" the Judge had then asked her gently. That his features were those of a white teacher whom she'd had, briefly, as a grade-school child, she did not wonder about.

"I'm not allowed to say in open court, Your Honor," she'd answered.

"Come into chambers," the Judge decided. And now she found herself standing in a spacious chamber lit by a great gas-burning chandelier casting a curious blue-green light.

"*Now*, young woman," he had demanded sternly, "What is this stuff? Liquid Cocaine?"

"Greater than cocaine, Your Honor," she had answered.

"Morphine sulphate?"

"Greater than morphine sulphate, Your Honor."

"Heroin?"

"Greater, your Honor."

"Come around here, Sis. The Judge had instructed her to come around to his side of the desk, and had opened a drawer: she'd seen a hundred different kinds of powders and pills; and a set of sixteen-gauge hypodermic needles.

"Any of *these*, Sis?"

"None of these, Your Honor," she'd tried to explain. "What I'm on is the Daddy of them All. Then the blue-green light of the great chandelier went down; and came up in a dark red glow.

So she came to her red-lit wakening. The red nightbulb of the narrow hall was casting shadows across her wall.

After such a dream, Vivi-V would lie talking softly to herself; or would sing very low so as not to waken the house:

All the good times are past 'n gone
All the good times are o'er

Her memory was a spiral stairwell whereon disasters came tumbling like sorrowing clowns. How long had it been since she's sung—a slender Sixty-Third Street chick with hair and fingernails dyed platinum blonde—in front of a microphone raised like a chromium cross

Good morning heartache
Here we go again—

above a soiled bar? How long had it been since she'd been billed as "a girl who was popular when she was here once before—I give you the Inimitable Vivienne Vincent."

The *Inimitable Vivi-V*. Who'd refused to sing like Sarah Vaughn; nor even like Her Nibs Miss Georgia Gibbs. Who'd let Miss Patti Page go her own way while *she* went her own, proudly belting lyrics out in night-blue dives till dawn. And belting each so inimitably that once a barfly had lifted his head and told a bartender, "I never heard anything like it"; and had put his head back on his hands.

Half-memories mixed with flash notions in her mind; remembering the same old soiled lyrics and the same old soiled bars. Little lacey fancies

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came, like kerchiefs on a line; turned and moved and wandered through her wandering mind. Small and silken fancies about singing for a living far beneath the traffic's cries.

Downward forever downward had been the route she'd gone, singing *Good Morning Heartache* to a thousand heartbroken dawns.

Until at last she'd cried out, to someone, toward morning, "I don't know what I'd do if I thought there wasn't any bottom"—and there had been no bottom. Only a falling without end.

She hadn't hit bottom yet.

Sometimes she would rise and begin gathering up soiled clothes, from the front room to the backsheets, shirts, underclothes, towels, curtains, socks, stockings, drapes, aprons, skirts, brassieres, handkerchiefs—all would go into the old-fashioned bathtub. In a soapified mist Vivi-V would wash, scrub, dry, and hang clothes from the front of the old flat to the back.

"She's on her laundry kick again," Beulah would report to Dingdong, "you got any shoelaces you want ironed?"

Even when a clothesline went up over his easy chair in the front room, and underwear began to hang against the windows, Dingdong never interfered with Vivi-V's compulsion to launder everything in sight.

For one thing, it kept her out of searching the flat for a hidden cache. For another, it got his laundry done.

"She's going to look for the cache in the gas-meter," Beulah would fink to the old man while the water was running in the tub. And would wonder, even as she finked, whether the cache actually *was* in the meter.

Once Beulah had warned him that Vivi-V was planning on breaking into the back of his cuckoo-clock, hanging above his easy chair. He'd never used the clock for a cache. But after he'd discovered that Vivi-V had opened it, and found nothing, he'd kept a cache there for a month. Then he'd tipped off Beulah to the clock; and had taken the heroin to another hiding place.

Sure enough, the clock was broken into that same night.

That was why, as much as the old man and Vivi-V distrusted one another, both distrusted Beulah: Double-Fink, Counter-Counter-Agent, Friendly Investigator, Perfidious Confidant, the most of all.

And why Beulah was so aware that, while she was keeping one eye on the old man for Vivi-V, and keeping the other on Vivi-V for him, and both were keeping an eye on each other, that each was keeping one eye on her.

"No one in my family was ever in politics, Emil," the cop, at the wheel of the car parked in the alley, assured his partner. "I had to break the ice entirely myself."

"Around five o'clock I begin to get tired," Emil recalled; for both were dead-weary of cruising.

"Leave the parking lights on, Stan," Emil suggested. "It looks better that way. Like we're just laying low for a culprit."

Stan wondered vaguely whether a culprit was a suspect who'd done time. He'd have to look it up.

"Sometimes I sleep overtime," he informed Emil, implying it might be best if one of them stayed awake.

"I got caught six times at Navy Pier," Emil boasted; just to let Stan know he hadn't yet been decorated for vigilance.

"I had a partner once who *never* wanted to sleep," Stan recalled dreamily.

"The fink," Emil sympathized.

His sympathy was lost. Stan was already snoring lightly. A moment later Emil was on the nod, too.

On the nod in a dead-end alley's depths, with a cardboard box over the flash. Law and Order was working quietly.

Four stories above them, Dingdong-Daddyland lay like a great refrigerator in which the light had gone out. The three outcasts slept among the broken-handled cups of hopes that had never come true. Their dreams, long dried, yet somehow still cherished, lay among crusts that had once been loaves.

The old con slept. Beulah slept. Only Vivi-V remained awake; waiting until Beulah's sleep grew deeper.

Then she unwound herself like a shadow from the sheets and moved like a ghost of a ghost, into the bathroom. She locked herself in and raised the lid of the water-closet, peering in at the water-bulb. On its surface she could see no sign of any mark where the rubber might have been split; so she tried it with her eyes shut, letting her fingers explore the surface of the rubber: the fingers came to a slight indentation and held there. She adjusted her specs with one hand, keeping a finger on the indentation. Then, peering more closely, she saw, sure enough, that a small slit had been made in the rubber and vulcanized. Her fingers found the edge of the patch and pried it off. In her anxiety she tore the slit wide—and there it was: a paper, a full ounce of *something*.

She sniffed it. It wasn't heroin. No matter. She melted a few grains in a spoon over the gas flame, took her sixteen-gauge needle out of her pocket, placed the spoon carefully beside a chair, sat down and crossed her ankles. Then she hit herself in an ankle vein with whatever it was.

She sat that way a long minute. Then she began scratching her upper lip; then her stomach, then her ankles. When she had finished scratching, she rose.

Wellsprings of energy began flooding her: she had never felt so well since she'd been born.

Beulah was used to waking to find Vivi-V missing; and then, by listening, to follow her movement about the flat by small creakings and creaks and murmurings beneath the creeper's feet.

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The sounds that wakened her now were not furtive: there was a clanging of pans and kettles and pots from the kitchen, and a high falsetto singing:

Blue Moon
You saw me standing alone

Beulah rose and saw every light in the house ablaze, and Vivi wearing not a stitch but a baby-blue apron tied behind her in a flowing bow matching her pink ribbon-bow. That bow looked now like the rainbowed halo of her junkified glow.

Vivi-V, racing near-naked between stove, pantry, and sink, then into the bathroom and back to the stove, forced Beulah to stand back against the kitchen wall to keep from getting knocked down.

"Is there something going on, dear?" Beulah asked.

"Oh, have *consideration, do* have consideration," Vivi scolded her on the run, "we're late with the chicken. Late with the roast! Not a clean tablecloth in the house! Somebody stole the best silver!"

"Why?" Beulah asked weakly. "Are we expecting somebody?"

"Oh for Heaven's sake, you know very well we're having guests—and there you stand not even offering to lend a hand!"

"I only thought it was early in the day to be making soup," Beulah explained.

"This isn't soup as you well know—it's hot water for the sheets and pillowcases—oh, *have* consideration."

"If you're going to launder tonight, honey," Beulah asked calmly, "why heat water on the stove? Why not just turn on the faucets in the tub?"

Vivi stopped and thought that over: "Why, *of course*, how *silly* of me. Will you turn on the water in the tub for me, there's a good girl? I have to watch the soup."

When Beulah had the hot water drawn, she stood by to keep the mad laundress from plunging into the scalding tub herself. For she was piling tablecloths, sheets, pillow-cases, window shades, shoes, spoons, napkins, saltshakers, shirts, and a potted geranium—pot and all—into the tub. Then began stirring it wildly with the old man's umbrella.

"Can I help in any way?" Beulah asked again. Vivi-V couldn't hear her because of the roaring of the water. Because of the steam, Beulah could hardly see her.

"Needle and thread on the dresser, dear," Vivi instructed. Beulah, "if you *really* want to help"—and one of Dingdong's socks came flying and dripping as it flew. Beulah caught it. And began a confused retreat.

Dingdong was sitting before the TV, that was still whirling blindly with sound turned down. Beulah entered quietly. She would say she was looking for needle and thread.

But the old man's head was sunk on his chest. He was snoring lightly. She watched him with her hand on the brass knob of the old-fashioned bedpost. And heard Vivi Vi caroling—

Red sails in the sunset
All day I've been blue—

EMIL sat up.

"What's the matter?" Stan asked. "I heard someone walkin'."

"We better start cruising. It might be Task Force Tuf."

Emil ducked into the rain, took the box off the car's flash, and in its blood-colored beam he saw a woman seated on the sill, washing a window in a 3 A.M. rain.

"Up there! Up *there*!" he jabbed a finger toward the wall.

"If you want to go up and find out, I'll wait here," Stan told Emil.

"What *are* people thinking of anyhow," Emil marvelled, "washing windows in the rain?"

Then he observed a puff of dark smoke blowing out the window past the woman on the sill. Well, he could just as easily have *not* seen *that*.

That same blood-red swing of light across his window had wakened Dingdong. He brushed his hand across his eyes, shook his great head, and shambled to the window.

He heard the the beat of the rain against the pane, and peered down. A squadrol with a cop at the wheel and another cop coming around the end of the car!

He raced to the front room where the blue films were stacked, hauling madly at twine he had knotted too taut. Stumbling into the bathroom, trailing the twine behind him, and didn't pause because the tub was full of steaming laundry. He heaped the film on top of the clothes, and raced back to the front room for more. Then for matches.

"They're on the way up! Don't let them in without a warrant!" he cried warning to Beulah, and hauled her by one arm to the front and shoved her into the bathroom. The film on top of the laundry blazed up.

Beulah began heaping cardboard cartons onto the fire, and the smell of burning rubber made a perfectly terrible stink.

While Vivi-V, enraptured by window washing, went endlessly washing and re-washing the rain-soaked pane.

Dingdong lurched and heaved and coughed and spat and choked and phlegmed from the front room to the back, heaping more cardboard cartons of *Dingdong Daddies* onto the fire, till smoke darkened the ceiling and made the lights burn like lights in an eclipse of the sun.

But Stan and Emil were merrily wheeling, already miles away; relieved to be out of the jurisdiction of the Chicago Fire Department.

Until Vivi-V finally slipped back into the kitchen, caroling as she came—

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I know there's room for me
Upon your knee

Dingdong, looking out the window, saw that the squadrol was gone. He sank into a chair, blue film dangling from his hands. Beulah sank onto a chair on the other side of the room.

Between them Vivi came in; looking done in. She was coming down fast. She looked like she wanted to say something; but the old man waved her off. She turned and went quietly. When Beulah followed her a few minutes after, she found Vivi sleeping the sleep of total exhaustion. The old man slept where he sat.

Toward noon he woke. Coughing and phlegming, in air black and odorous, spitting now and then, he moved through the flat assessing the useless damage.

Broken boxes, burned film, clothing and ruined sheets that had been both washed and scorched, a smoldering shoe: a pot of stew that had boiled over into the flooded forging-room—from front to back Daddyland looked like a land struck by a tornado, fire, and flood.

Yet a many-splendored line of *Feathered Friends* was still festooned above the stove; like a rainbow of hope in the smoldering air.

Would some neighbors report smoke? A fire inspector at the door would be as catastrophic as a policeman. All morning Vivi-V and Dingdong shared their common dread: kicking a habit cold turkey for her; dying in a cell for him. And in this common fear their feud was forgotten. There was no longer any point in threatening one another with prison; when prison for both was so near.

She opened windows, drove out the smoke, and cleaned up the litter. He helped as best he could.

"Beulah's sleeping late," he complained to Vivi-V.

"Let her sleep," Vivi-V decided.

Toward noon Vivi-V went into the bedroom to wake Beulah. She came out looking so bleak that the old man guessed before she'd said a word.

"*Gone*?"

"*Gone*."

Beulah had crept downstairs in the night like a bug in flight.

Where had she gotten the courage to leave? The old man looked in the bulb of the water-closet. Finding it split and the stuff he'd hidden there gone, he assumed that that had been where she'd found the courage. When he checked his bedroom, however, and found she'd missed his big cache, he felt gratified that she'd taken such a minute prize. He never learned that she had gone without taking any drug at all: that she had simply fled in dread of the police. To take her own chances on the street.

Dingdong seemed to accept Beulah's flight with resignation. But after Vivi-V had cleaned up the kitchen, flushed the last condom down the drain, and the last bit of evidence against the old man's enterprise had been destroyed, he rose and fumbled about until he found a piece of chalk. He ran a rag across a section of the wall to serve as a blackboard. Then, with his tongue between his teeth, and Vivi-V sleeping, he went to work.

Sometimes on tiptoe and sometimes flatfooted, pausing now and again to spit, scratch himself, or lean back to gain perspective, he completed his letter to the world. Then the chalk dropped from his hand, and he went to his bed; weary to his very bone.

Later, Vivi-V saw a rude caricature of a woman with a neck like a turkey-hen's, the belly bloated and the knees badly knocked, the breasts lactated like empty hot-water bottles, the whole figure stippled by a disfiguring hair, and flies buzzing about the figure everywhere. Below the old man had scrawled his final conviction:

WOMIN DRAWS FLIES

"A once great mind has snapped," Vivi-V commented aloud—and wiped the figure out with two swipes of a damp cloth.

THOUGH the lives of all three had been in the hands of each, the balance of power shifted with one of the three gone.

With Beulah at hand, Vivi had been the most imperiled of the lot; because the old man could open the gates of a terrible sickness upon her any moment he chose.

Now he *had* to keep her well. For there was nobody now but her to shop and cook and wash and help him make it from day to day.

The old man's cell-mate never came any longer. Yet every morning she found a pinch of heroin beside a spoon on his dresser. Every noon there was another pinch. And at night there was another pinch for her to sleep on.

She searched that bedroom high and low—even when she knew he was only feigning sleep. She raised his pillow when he raised his head; there was nothing under his pillow.

When she swept under the bed she examined the bedsprings; nothing was hiden there. She looked behind the mirror; in the light fixture and along the walls. It *had* to be in his bedroom. He hadn't been out of it in days. Yet she never found a single pinch.

Meanwhile she shaved him, washed him, humored him; brought him tea and toast and little candies to suck on. She changed his sheets and listened to rambling accounts of merry penitentiary times.

So it was that, in his final hours, the old man drew some small ironic measure of contentment from a woman at last.

Once, toward evening, he looked up at her as though he had never seen her before.

"What I said about bedbugs—you know—" he faltered—"was just in fun."

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"What I told you was in fun, too," Vivi-V assured him.

The old man's face flopped about: he was trying to smile.

Vivi opened his window every morning; so he could hear the jackhammers breaking stone half a mile away.

Every morning they came nearer. One morning he asked her to open the window wider so that he could hear them. But, when she opened the window, he could not hear them at all.

"It's Sunday," she explained. But he didn't seem to understand why he couldn't hear jackhammers. Suddenly he asked, "How much your little sausages?"—and asked it urgently.

He died that evening just before the street lamps came on. When she came into his room with tea, he was sitting up; but the glaze was on his eyes. She laid his head back on the pillow, understanding her dream at last.

"The kick greater than H," she told herself aloud, taking his wristwatch and ring.

In her final search, all she found was a couple of twenties in his wallet and a few dimes on his dresser.

Yet once, as she looked about the bedroom, her hand rested, where Beulah's hand had, on the big brass knob of his bed. She had never noticed that the knobs of the bedposts could be unscrewed; nor that the posts were hollow. She never knew that, beneath her hand, was five pounds of pure heroin.

She left the door open behind her. And walked, in a light November snow, to the Desplaines Street station. She came in there looking like the ghost of a ghost wearing a pink ribbon-bow.

"Vivienne Vincent," she told the officer at the desk, "there's a couple warrants out on me."

Half an hour later Stan and Emil were mounting the stairs. Sure enough, just like that old junkie had said, there *was* a stiff.

Some stiff. Wasn't even wearing a watch.

"Maybe the Fire Department was here already," Emil suggested.

Stan found a pair of pants that fit him, supported by a pair of suspenders with clips that said *Police Brace* on them. Emil found a woman's raincoat. A package of dry cereal and a bucket of hardened rubber was all their search for treasure yielded.

The few sticks of furniture weren't worth hauling down the stairs. The bed was such an old-fashioned heap it wasn't worth dragging down four flights.

"Besides, the stiff's still in it," Emil pointed out.

The dead-wagon came. A woman on her way to the supermarket with a shopping bag, the words VOTE FOR DALEY emblazoned on it in red, white, and blue, stopped to watch the dead-wagon boys lift a corpse into the dead-wagon.

"I'm glad it ain't me," she thought; and went her ways.

The Board of Health inspectors didn't bother cleaning out the flat because the building was coming down anyhow.

The first swing of the wrecking-ball buried the old bed under tons of bricks.

Before the bricks were hauled away, the year's earliest snow lay lightly above them. Then a contractor, using County Jail labor, hauled them away.

THIS WAS in that time of year when silver-paper bells hang by tinseled cords in the offices of all the loan companies. It was that time when Save-Your-Home-Loans holds Open-House-For-Money in offices lit by an aluminum Christmas tree: one proudly bearing a shining six-foot papier-maché dollar-sign, hung with brightly-polished quarters, nickels, and dimes; all the while it keeps slowly revolving.

While poorer firms can offer no more than tidings of comfort and joy under a single unmoving star.

Till a winter of a single wind set in. Then snow-shadows went tobogganing down the crumpled, yellowed, tattery-torn mattress that the old man had died upon. And at night a street lamp shone upon the bent and dented upside-down bedposts the old man had died between.

The midnight B-train passed overhead. And no one who rode the B-train knew that a hundred-thousand-dollars worth of fine white dust stayed dry in the deeps of those rusting posts.

All that winter smudgefires burned, both sides of West Congress, after the jackhammers had gone still.

And phantoms of old-time junkies passed and repassed between their wild flares.

Shadows of long-gone hepsters, phantoms of fools who never could learn, went by like shadows on old walls: forever trying to turn one more trick.

Nobody remembers where Beulah went. Nobody has heard from Vivi-V. Where the old man is buried nobody knows.

The passion that, in him, had been transformed by fear of women, into love of something he could love more *safely*—something like a paper doll, or a girl with a rabbit's tail on her bottom, curiously overlapped that of lives much more affluent yet equally barren.

For when the old man wrote WOMIN DRAWS FLIES he wrote out of a secret fury against his mother for giving him birth.

His letter to the world was a word against all birth: that comes from love of man for woman.

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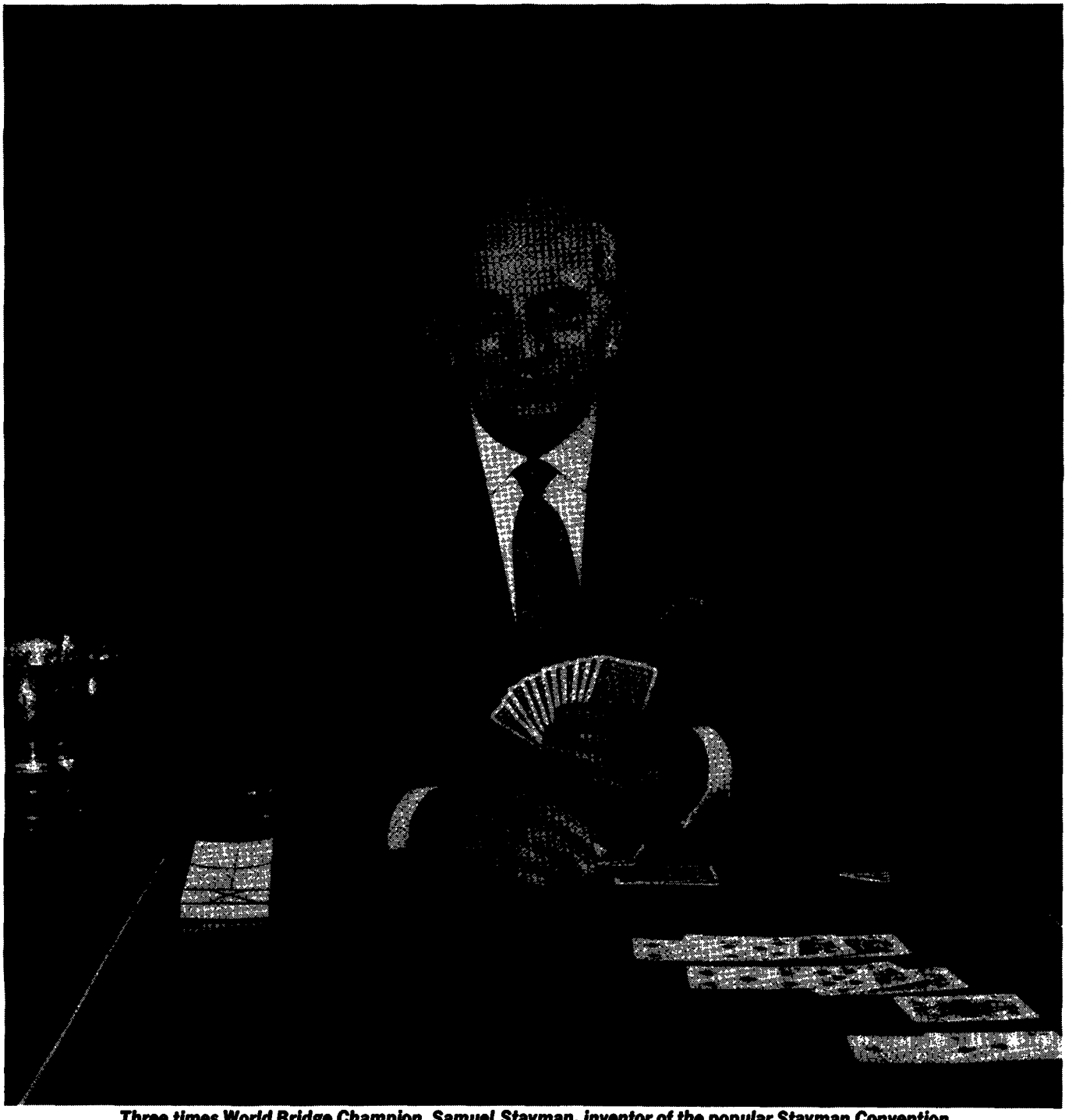

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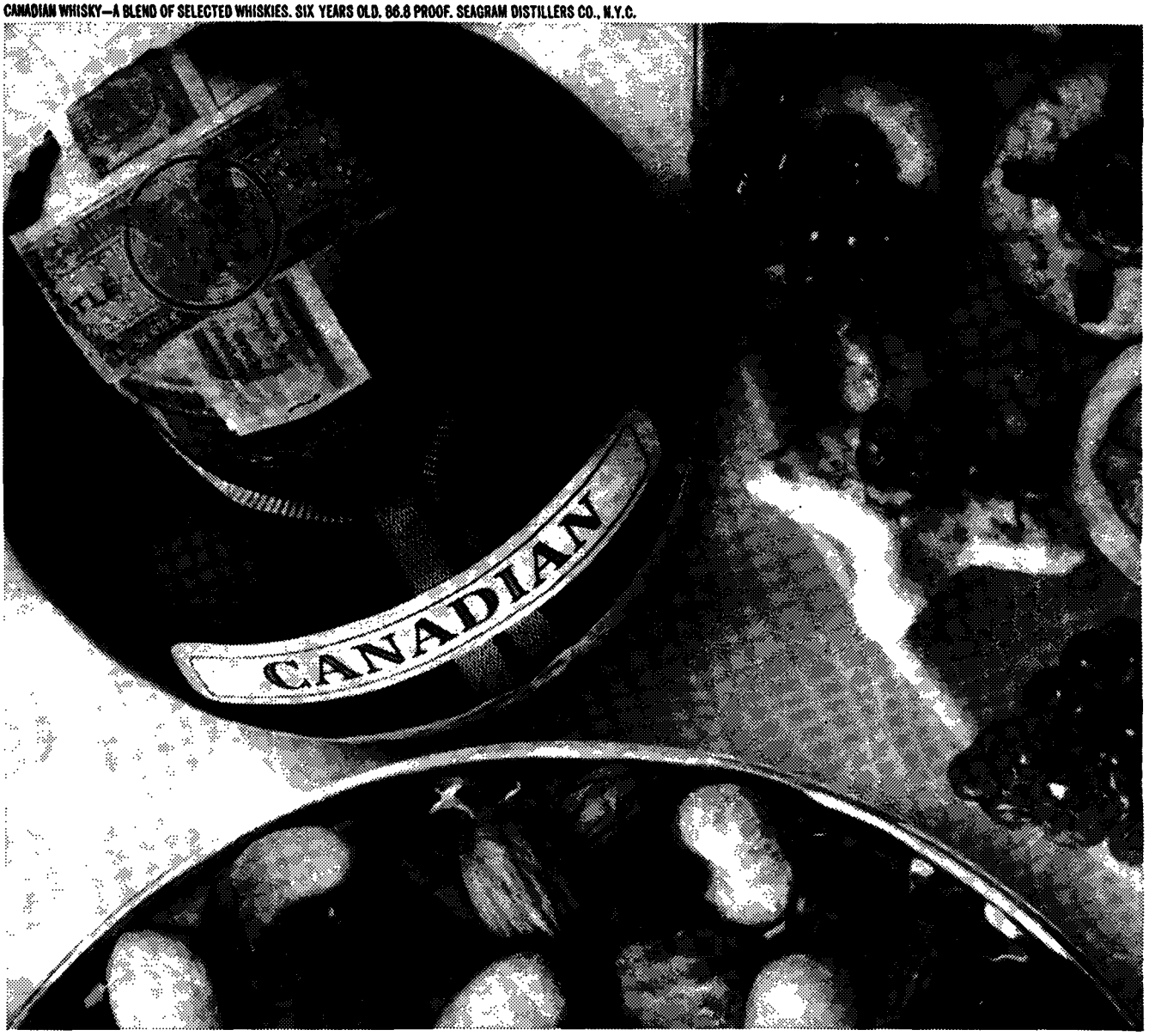

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De Gaulle—A Summing Up

George Lichtheim

PARIS, July.—The eight million inhabitants of this city are currently about to go on their annual vacation in a fairly relaxed mood. Most of them are entitled to four weeks' statutory paid holiday, a piece of legislation not yet enacted in some countries which fancy themselves more advanced. The others seem to be making their own arrangements for going abroad or staying with country cousins, the net result being an atmosphere curiously remote from last year's near-revolutionary ferment. In part this is plainly due to exhaustion. No volcano erupts twice within a year, and even the French must have a pause before they can resume the national pastime of unmaking governments.

This then is a season for stocktaking. Most students are pleased to have got rid of an elderly ruler who had overstayed his welcome. The middle-aged think back to the 1939 military parade on July 14—the last before the outbreak of war; also the last occasion on which cavalry served a more than purely ornamental purpose. Though as a matter of fact the French army in 1940 had more tanks than the Germans: it just did not know how to use them, having failed to listen to the warnings uttered a few years earlier by a then widely unknown staff officer named Charles de Gaulle.

This officer (one learns from his numerous biographers) was not universally liked by colleagues and superiors. Students of his writings cannot fail to discern at least one good reason why this should have been so: he never hesitated to say and do unpopular things. His early reflections on military leadership—published in 1932 under the promising title *Le Fil de l'épée* (*The Edge of the Sword*)—ran clean counter to the then prevailing rhetoric, which was both pacifist and democratic. Their author put forward what might fairly have been called an elitist view of politics, clothed in the sort of intellectual arrogance that comes natural to Frenchmen of all political parties: casual allusions to Tolstoy, Bergson, and Flaubert; sweeping historical judgments; and an undercurrent of late-Roman stoicism, unusual, to say the least, in a practicing Catholic. "Evangelical perfection does not lead to empire." "The man of action is not conceivable without a good dose of egoism, pride, hardness, and cunning." No hypocrisy here. A modern-minded technocrat, too, who had read his Spengler:

> Nowadays individualism is in retreat. . . . Everywhere there appears the need for association. . . . It is for the Army to take a share in this evolution. . . . Instruction, training, and uniform are in no way contrary to the century of trade unions, highway codes, Taylorism, and great department stores.

How very true. But not exactly what democratic politicians like to be told. And what were the pious to make of this?:

> For after all, can one comprehend Greece without Salamis, Rome without the legions, Christianity without the sword, Islam without the scimitar, the Revolution without [the battle of] Valmy, the League of Nations without the victory of France?

Two years later the work that made him famous, *l'Armée de Metier* (mistranslated as *The Army of the Future*), terminated with a flourish:

> For the sword is the axis of the world, and greatness cannot be shared.

Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear, this will never do. Let us go and hide under the bed. Let us join the Peace Pledge Union. Let us preach "collective security" without rearmament. Let us applaud the Munich surrender. Let us, in short, be good American liberals or British Labourites: spiritual descendants of John Locke who spent a lifetime trying to make people forget what that dreadful man Hobbes had been saying: "And covenants, without the sword, are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all." How *could* anyone say such a thing! John Locke never did. John Locke was a stockholder in the slave-trading Royal Africa Company, but he never in so many words defended the actual practice of the trade: he simply averted his embarrassed gaze from it. He also provided the Whig aristocrats, whose servant and pensioner he was, with a political doctrine suitable to their aims *after* they had seized power (quite illegally) in 1688. John Locke had many spiritual descendants, including Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, and John Stuart Mill. And Mill begat the Fabians, but he

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also begat Neville Chamberlain, that earnest Unitarian and municipal reformer of whom Lloyd George said contemptuously in 1917: "He would make a good mayor of Birmingham in a lean year." But he made a very bad Prime Minister in 1937.

Not that the French were any better off. Their leaders (Clemenceau having died in 1929) were called Daladier, Bonnet, Blum, and Reynaud. Unlike Chamberlain they were intelligent and had few illusions. But they were helpless too. Daladier—War Minister from 1936 to 1940—was the most helpless of the lot. Popularly known as "the bull of Vaucluse," on account of his frequent but futile rages, he was the man responsible for letting the amiable but feeble Gamelin ruin the French army. The other military leaders were either senile defeatists like Pétain or stoical pessimists like de Gaulle. When in March 1940, two months before the collapse, a group of British parliamentarians called on Brigadier de Gaulle at the headquarters of his armored division, he greeted them with the words: "Gentlemen, you will be seeing an army that is going to be defeated."

What *could* one do with a man of this sort? Especially when he insisted on going on with the war after his military and civilian superiors had surrendered, thereby at one stroke becoming a hero and making all the others look foolish? Ever since those days when de Gaulle wrenched himself loose from the military caste into which he had been born, its senior members have hated him with a deep hatred. He had had the effrontery to be right about the use of armor before 1940, and now he had put himself at the head of a motley volunteer army largely composed—as he once remarked in a cynical aside—of "Jews, Negroes, and Communists." In addition to which he publicy identified himself with France, even allowing it to be understood that a distant ancestor had fought and bled under Jeanne d' Arc's banner. Churchill, a Tory romantic, half understood him, and on occasion made a feeble attempt to shield him from Roosevelt's petty spite and the solemn idiocy of Cordell Hull, but for the most part de Gaulle had to rely on bluff. Only in 1943, when the underground resistance movement in France went over to him, did the American and British governments reluctantly renounce their fatuous plans for putting the bovine Giraud in his place.

EVER SINCE those stirring days *les Anglo-Saxons* have been in the General's bad books; but there was more to it than resentment. De Gaulle's idiosyncratic personality hid a popular undercurrent—vaguely describable as Bonapartism—with which the French are familiar, but which they find difficult to explain to foreigners. The syndrome is made up of nationalism, Catholicism, a certain amount of Jacobin republicanism (the *Marseillaise,* the Tricolor), military romanticism, contempt for parliamentarians ("a lot of windbags"), faith in popular sovereignty (*la nation*), belief in an abstraction called "France," and lofty disdain for fifty million actually existing Frenchmen. Dislike of foreigners comes into it, too, but no particular resentment against the Germans. Anyway the Reich was gone, and the Bonn government was all for working with France. When de Gaulle returned to power in 1958 he could have it both ways: be friends with Adenauer, and still run the Continental show. He could also preach disengagement in Central Europe and an end to the cold war, until the Russians marched their battalions into Prague and thus brought to nought his plans for circumventing the NATO alliance.

For the economic infrastructure of the European movement—the Common Market of the Six—de Gaulle was in no way responsible. On the contrary, he had been against it, and on taking office once more in 1958 he accepted it reluctantly as part of a package deal with the Socialists and Christian-Democrats. Their leaders had come running to Colombey when the army in Algeria threatened to get out of hand, and in due course President Coty invited "the most illustrious of Frenchmen" (as he termed him in an address to the National Assembly) to form a new government.

But although de Gaulle towered above his ministers, the party system was then still intact, and the majority had staked its all on the Common Market, Franco-German amity, and keeping the British out of Continental affairs until they were ready to be "good Europeans." De Gaulle inherited this orientation and, for all the differences in style, did not really introduce any basic change, except that he gradually became friendlier to the Russians and less friendly to the Americans. He was quite willing to make the most of the Paris-Bonn axis, but he rarely troubled to hide his belief that Germany would and should stay divided. And he publicly went out of his way to proclaim that France recognized the Oder-Neisse line as the new frontier between Germany and Poland. This was something the parliamentarians of the Fourth Republic had never dared to do, just as they had never dared to cut the Gordian knot in Algeria by giving the country its independence. To that extent the Fifth Republic did represent something new. It had become a Presidential regime. The President since 1965 was elected by the people, and once installed he could do more or less what he liked.

Across the Rhine the political landscape had altered too. When the Allies in 1945 abolished Prussia as a political entity, turned its eastern regions over to Russia and Poland, and allowed the remainder, plus Saxony, to become a Soviet satellite, they created a new balance of forces within West German society. The ancient love-

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hate relationship with France went on in the breast of each individual German, but the pro-French tendency within the political elite now had the upper hand. In the days of the Weimar Republic it had always been in a minority. Only the Social Democrats and the left wing of the Catholic Center party really favored reconciliation, and they lacked real power. The Communists had their new spiritual homeland in Russia; the Right dreamed of a war of revenge, and the Right controlled the army. Conservative opinion in Prussia for over a century had seen France as the hereditary enemy, the *Erbfeind,* and the traditional Conservatives, by way of the Lutheran Church, possessed a secure hold over masses of people in town and country whom the liberal intellectuals (mostly Jews anyway) could not reach. All this changed after 1945. The Bonn government now had a predominantly Roman Catholic base, and even a conservative Bavarian like Strauss preferred France to other potential allies—Britain included.

When in 1966 the Christian Democrats felt obliged to take the SPD into partnership, the pro-French orientation was reinforced, even though the Social Democrats did not have much use for de Gaulle. The extreme Right, such as it was, kept quiet. Its leaders grudgingly conceded that there was no alternative to the French alliance. Some of them developed a discreet admiration for the General. The others thought it best to await his departure. They did not care for his pro-Soviet orientation, and they were bitter when he publicly recognized Polish sovereignty over the lost provinces, but in public at least they said nothing. In the old days they would have raged and foamed. This was not just a matter of political prudence. Something had changed in the depths of the national psyche.

VIEWED FROM Whitehall this Francophilia was a trifle alarming. Churchill had favored it. His successors were less happy about it, especially when in the 1960's Britain's international standing was slowly eroded. Europeanism was all very well, but a Europe run jointly by the French and the Germans might become too powerful for comfort. If these Continentals could no longer be manipulated, the Foreign Office's chief occupation was gone. The Common Market had come into being despite persistent British obstruction. When the Macmillan government, urged on by the Kennedy administration, finally sought entry in 1962, de Gaulle slammed the door and the Germans did nothing to help. Nor was the Wilson government any more fortunate with its application. In any case Britain's financial troubles made it doubtful whether membership in the EEC might not prove the kind of "cure" that kills the patient.

The Tories meanwhile had begun to turn away from their ancient concern with an Empire that had become a Commonwealth of unruly—and mostly colored—republics. The anonymous London wit who remarked "Once the Union Jack has been hauled down, I don't care if the natives start eating each other" spoke for many. Europeanism began to make converts. So did crypto-Gaullism. The most nationalist Tory of them all, Enoch Powell, was also the brainiest, and his public pronouncements were distinctly modeled on Gaullism. He had no use for the Empire, or for the Americans and their war in Vietnam. He wanted the troops brought back from Singapore and sent to the Rhine. He did not want colored immigrants—in fact he wanted Britain to be both independent and European; and he was reputedly willing to share nuclear secrets with France. It was all very disconcerting: the Foreign Office could no longer control the Tory party. It could not even control the *Times* which under its new Roman Catholic editor had become pro-Europe and pro-Biafra, and on both grounds critical of the Whitehall Mandarinate. The weekly *Spectator,* for long the organ of Conservative intellectualism, had gone Gaullist too. It raged against the arming of Nigeria, sneered at the Foreign Office for mismanaging relations with France, and snarled at the Treasury for wrecking the country's finances. The Mandarins were no longer sacred! It was as though the *Osservatore Romano* had told the College of Cardinals to go and jump into the Tiber.

The General's abrupt return to Colombey superimposed itself upon this situation and brought the latent crisis to the boil. Strauss came to London in May and invited the British to join a federal Europe, whereupon Whitehall promptly discovered that it did not really like political union: all it wanted was entry into the Common Market. But the European federalists were now once more in the saddle, and Strauss added to the embarrassment by blandly urging the British to pool their nuclear armaments with the French. As for himself, he wanted no part of any nuclear arsenal (he said). Here was a new sort of Gaullism, this time coming from the Germans. It signified that Bonn expected the Tories to return to office and to cut loose from their American protectors.

There was trouble on the home front too. Various eminent public figures (including a former newspaper tycoon with Liberal-Labour sympathies) publicly announced that the country was not being effectively governed. They even hinted that Mr. Wilson might be something of a joke. The *Times* urged him to resign. The *Economist* protested that it was undignified for Britain to be so deeply in hock as to incur supervision from the International Monetary Fund. There was, one newspaper declared editorially, "a smell of Weimar in the air."

There was no smell of Weimar when the present writer passed through West Germany in May on his way to Paris. Nor is there any such smell

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in the Paris air, rumors to the contrary notwithstanding. It is true that France currently gives the impression of having reverted a short distance back to Fourth Republic politics, but this is a pause the country can afford. It has recently accomplished two-thirds of a social mutation and can permit itself the luxury of looking a bit trite after years of Cornelian grandeur. Why and how this has happened is our next subject.

II

At the peak of last year's general strike, with ten million workers in occupation of the factories, an exhausted police force on the point of nervous collapse, and a governmental machine in full disarray, there was a moment when de Gaulle toyed with the idea of resigning. Had he done so, the electoral battle would in all probability have been won by the parties of the Left, and their candidate would have been installed in the Elysée. On one condition: the Communists would have had to back a moderate Socialist for the Presidency of the Republic. They were in fact committed (on paper) to voting for Mitterand, who had polled 45 per cent of the popular vote against de Gaulle in 1965. But there was a snag: Mitterand had announced his intention to make Mendès-France Prime Minister, and the CP did not want Mendès-France. Hence it ended the general strike, thus enabling de Gaulle to stay in power for another year. In the process it destroyed its credibility with the revolutionary minority among the workers and students, but that was a small price to pay.

For the benefit of domestic and foreign critics, Waldeck Rochet & Co. employed a more respectable argument: there was (they said solemnly) a danger of civil war which the working class could not hope to win. The threadbareness of this excuse became evident when it transpired that the army never had the slightest intention of using force against the workers, though it was ready enough to crush an armed insurrection (which no one had proposed). The whole point about the general strike was that it made possible a peaceful takeover by the democratic Left. This was precisely what the Communists were determined to prevent. If they could not seize power —and they knew it was impossible—then it was best to let the strike fizzle out. Otherwise they might have ended up supporting a government committed to democratic socialism, and that would never do.

Twelve months later the problem returned to plague them. De Gaulle having bowed out after his defeat in the April referendum, the Left might have closed ranks behind someone whom the ordinary voter could trust. Mitterand was no longer in the running. Doubly discredited by his unconstitutional behavior in May 1968 and by his refusal to break with the Communists after the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, he stood revealed as the unprincipled demagogue he had always been. The Socialists having nominated the eminently respectable but rather dull Defferre, the CP put forward its own candidate: the former pastry-cook Jacques Duclos, a jovial veteran of seventy-two, famed for his gargantuan appetite and his unflinching loyalty to the party line. There was no question (Georges Marchais, on behalf of the Politbureau, declared over the airwaves on May 7) of the Communists backing Mendès-France for the Presidency: "In the name of what party, what political force? Are we to have Mendès-France presented to us all over again as a miracle-man who can solve all problems?" They were confident that Duclos would pull out the entire Communist vote (over 20 per cent of the total) thus coming third in the race: as indeed on June 1 he did.

On May 13 Mendès-France broke a long silence by coming out for Defferre, thereby disappointing his few remaining admirers. Both men knew well enough that they stood no chance, but they felt that the time had come to put the CP in its place. As Mendès-France explained in a long interview with the left-wing *Nouvel Observateur* the following week, it was a matter of bringing democratic socialism back to life. There was a potential mass following for a candidate of the democratic Left on the next occasion anyway, but the bulk of this electoral army would not support a coalition dominated by the CP.

It is an established fact (confirmed by opinion polls taken before de Gaulle's departure) that whereas 60 per cent of the voters vaguely favor some kind of "socialism," only 5 per cent want "Soviet socialism." Even three-quarters of the Communist electorate don't want it! The CP, for all its solid organization and its millions of voters, is a colossus with clay feet. It has long ceased to be a revolutionary force in the traditional sense and it lacks credibility as a reformist one. Its leadership is mired in stale Muscovite slogans and loyalties. It has been outflanked on its Left by the dissident Socialist PSU, and since the invasion of Prague it has once more come to look pestiferous to ordinary democrats who in 1965-67 had hesitantly moved toward a Popular Front. It is losing some of the younger workers to Trotskyist and Maoist splinter groups who, for all their sectarian rigidity, have inherited the ancient syndicalist "direct action" tradition. Its intellectuals are fed up with the East European police state which has for so long been presented to them as the incarnation of socialism. Why then waste time on aged stoneheads like Waldeck Rochet and Duclos? Why go into partnership with a lot of crapulous Stalinists whom the ordinary voter does not trust, whom the New Left denounces as traitors to the revolution, and whom the Old Right regards as traitors to the nation?

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The Socialists have to think of the future, and the young technocrats of Rocard's *Parti Socialiste Unifié* are even less inclined to take the Communists seriously. They are looking to a day when socialism will no longer be identified with Moscow. When that time comes, it will be the end for the CP, as well as for its Trotskyist and Maoist offshoots: all of them mouthing a language that is fifty years out of date.

It will also be the end for that section of the Right which for decades has kept going by casting itself in the role of the Archangel Michael battling the demons of hell. De Gaulle, who never took the Communists seriously, for years made a habit of warning his television audiences of the awful fate in store for them if Satan's legions were to invade the heavenly citadel. He knew as well as anyone that few Frenchmen were intent on being governed by a bunch of Stalinist liars and murderers, but it suited him to pretend otherwise. Gaullism defined itself in nationalist terms, and Malraux never tired of proclaiming that Frenchmen must choose between the nation and its enemies. When the General stepped down, men like Debré stood ready to repeat the same tune (while privately telling the Russians not to worry: French foreign policy would remain unchanged). But something unexpected happened: the Right having lost its Man of Destiny, and the Left having committed harakiri, the voters plumped for Pompidou.

THE FRENCH people put up with de Gaulle for a decade because they were tired of the parliamentary circus and because the General appealed to the romantic streak in them. They knew him too well to think of him as a dictator, and they greatly enjoyed his rudeness to foreigners. Unlike the more imaginative foreign correspondents stationed in Paris, they did not see him as a threat to their liberties. The boredom of state-controlled television apart (and one could always tune in to foreign stations), the Fifth Republic was not particularly oppressive. The gendarmerie behaved no worse than it had done under the Fourth. Every conceivable party and sect went on flourishing, and the entire press —including Trotskyist and Anarchist journals— drew concealed state subsidies in the form of lowered cable and telephone rates. The universities were full of old Marxists, and the film studios overrun by young Anarchists. When a few left-wing organizations were "dissolved" (on paper) after the general strike, they moved next door and gave themselves a new name. Wages were low, but they finally went up after the strike. The only real sufferers were the mainstay of Gaullism—the country folk in general and the small holders in particlar.

For these were the years when France at last became a modern country, and the Gaullist technocracy had no use for the peasant. It wanted him to leave his village for the nearest town, and it did its level best to speed his departure. Millions did leave, thereby worsening an already grave housing shortage and swelling the number of opposition voters. The regime in fact sawed off the branch on which it was sitting. Its electoral clientele was overwhelmingly made up of peasants, shopkeepers, housewives, pensioners, and elderly veterans of two world wars. It systematically discriminated against them in favor of industry, large-scale mechanized farming, supermarkets, motor cars, and nuclear arms designed to replace the traditional infantry. The trick worked for a decade because the country was enamored of Charles de Gaulle. While he held the stage it was possible to overlook the fact that his ministers were bankers or planners who had no use for the old traditional France of the peasant farm and the corner grocery.

The general strike in May 1968 briefly terrified the peasantry and the lower-middle-class into voting for the Gaullists, but by April of the following year the General's magic had begun to pall. The referendum campaign was lost because a section of the conservative electorate stayed home on polling day. Peasants and shopkeepers had been angered by a further tightening of the tax screw, and their faith in the General was on the wane. "They know they're condemned by the modern world and they're at their wits' end," a Senatorial friend of Poher remarked with engaging candor after the referendum results were announced. "All they ask for is a little understanding—just enough to give them time to adapt themselves to the situation." It was this section of Old France which briefly looked to Poher. He seemed sympathetic to their needs—the other candidates less so.

Gaullism had always meant two different things: the General and his party. The former drew 80 per cent of the popular vote in his first referendum of October 1958, when a new Constitution was adopted after the parliamentary regime had collapsed. He held the loyalty of 60 to 80 per cent of the voters during the years of the Algerian drama, when the country was poised on the edge of civil war. He got his new Constitution amended by over 60 per cent in 1962, with the Presidency for the first time thrown open to popular vote. Three years later he was forced into a run-off under the very electoral law he had driven through. Yet all the time his party never approached a majority. It polled no more than 20 per cent of the vote against his own 80 in 1958, and barely 47 per cent ten years later, after the failure of the general strike. These same 47 per cent turned out once more in the April referendum. It was not enough. The magic had began to wear off. Too many angry shopkeepers stayed at home. Too many workers, politicized by the general strike, followed the lead of their unions and voted "no." Too many young people,

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for whom talk of 1940 and the Resistance meant nothing, demonstrated against what they called a "police state" (they had never seen a real one). Too many pro-Americans, pro-Europeans, or pro-Israelis concluded that it was time for the Old Man to go. He had traded on their fear of chaos, but that fear was diminishing. In June 1968 the French had discovered Pompidou. In April 1969 some of them discovered a hitherto unknown Senator called Poher. If it was a matter of exchanging Don Quixote for Sancho Panza these voters knew where to turn.

III

THE GENERAL knew it too. His departure was in character. The man who had reproached Napoleon with having "muffed his exit" was determined to choose his own manner of going. There was to be no Waterloo, rather a dignified retreat from an untenable position. If the nation rejected him, he would retire to his country estate like a true Roman. But why gamble on the outcome of yet another popular referendum, when the proposed reform legislation could have been rammed through the National Assembly by the compact Gaullist majority? Quite possibly he thought he could win. The terrain had been carefully chosen. Decentralization of government was popular, and under normal circumstances would have swung the small-town conservative vote. The reform of the Senate was copied—down to details—from Mendès-France's very similar proposals in his book *La République moderne* (1962). There was nothing wrong with the broad strategy of the appeal. The tactical mistake lay in underrating the resentment of a provincial middle class which had been paying for the country's modernization. These people traditionally took their lead from the local *notables*: the half-million town councillors and other worthies who administer France's 30,000 urban and rural communes. In the past they had underpinned the parliamentary Republic. Then for a decade most of them had supported or tolerated de Gaulle from fear of revolution. In May-June 1968 they discovered to their amazement that the Communist party was a paper tiger. Thereafter they began to think in terms of *"après de Gaulle."*

Class analysis led to similar results. The *grande bourgeoisie* of bankers and industrialists was mostly for Pompidou: a great organizer and a man to be trusted. The managerial stratum was split: a section of it favored Mendès-France. Younger technicians, professional men, and white-collar workers looked into the mirror and what they saw bore some resemblance to Michel Rocard: a Socialist but a youthful technocrat too, no friend of revolution and other lost causes that might appeal to students besotted by the bearded image of Che Guevara. Christian Democrats and most Social Democrats would eventually vote for Poher, thus swelling his popular following. Was that enough to elect him? And, if elected, would he take the country back to parliamentary rule? In any case, he represented those elements of Old France who urged that the tempo of modernization be slowed down.

The rest was standard stuff, including the poisonous remark about "Jewish gold," attributed to France's official delegate at the United Nations, and promptly denied in Paris when the inevitable protests rolled in. Mudslinging is part of the game, and the French have traditionally excelled in it. Old-timers in Paris can recall the days when elections were lost or won by accusing one's opponents of being in the pay of foreigners. "This is going to be the dirtiest campaign ever," some of these veterans said with relish in early May. It wasn't—television saw to that. The medium does not lend itself to the sort of character assassination that is promoted by underhand whispering campaigns impugning a candidate's personal honor. A certain amount of filth was duly put into circulation, but it was tedious stuff, hardly worth the bother. Mme. Pompidou was said to have attended Parisian orgies also frequented by other fashionable people vaguely involved in the squalid Marcovic murder case. Mme. Poher was said to have gone mad and to have been shipped off to South America by her husband: this came as a surprise to the neighbors who saw her shopping as usual. By the standards of the Fourth Republic—not to mention the Third—it was a poor performance, and a lot of it boomeranged on the organizers. The France of 1969 had outgrown *Clochemerle*. It had at long last become a modern country, and as such it chose Pompidou.

The real issues had been blurred by the General's idiosyncratic style, his personal charisma, and the ceremonial aspect of Gaullism as a system of government. Both Poher and Pompidou were obliged to repudiate this part of the heritage, and Poher at least managed to sound like a Fourth Republic politician. The small-town electorate liked his modesty. The managerial stratum was less enthusiastic. A section of it had been seduced by the technocratic aspect of Gaullism while the others hankered after socialism. With Poher one would have republican democracy, but was that enough?

The General did nothing to make things easier for the faithful. His departure for County Kerry looked like a gesture of disdain, but it could also be interpreted as a silent disavowal of his heir-apparent. Had de Gaulle lost faith in Pompidou? At any rate he did not help him much by vacating the scene in this manner. It was one thing to return to Colombey. It was another matter to leave the country without a word of encouragement for his former Prime Minister, now battling for his political life. In May 1968 de Gaulle had

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looked like Canute trying to hold back the tide. A year later he seemed intent on playing Lear or Timon. It suited his temper to signify that the French were unworthy of him, but it did not help Gaullism as a movement capable of surviving its founder. Nor did it advance the cause of "participation" (for practical purposes meaning profit-sharing in industry). This had been an ancient hobby-horse of socially-minded Catholics. The employers did not care for it, and neither did the unions. But if "participation" went down the drain, what was left of Gaullism? And if Gaullism was a lost cause, then the choice narrowed down to Pompidou's technocratic "pragmatism" (blessed word), and the small-town respectability of Poher, "the French Harry Truman."

How GENUINE was the choice anyway? Pompidou—born in the mountain village of Montboudif in the Auvergne (a source of endless hilarity to his countrymen)—was the son of a Socialist schoolteacher and the grandson of a peasant. Himself a professor of Greek before becoming a civil servant, then a banker, finally de Gaulle's Prime Minister, he could be said to represent both the old France and the new. Win or lose, his cause would go marching on. And what was that cause if not the transformation of France into a modern industrial country? And Europe? But the Europe of Poher and his friends was not easy to distinguish from that of Pompidou. The Gaullists indeed had always opposed federalism: the creation of a supra-national European government. But if the Christian Democrats were closer to Bonn on this issue, the Gaullists might discover a certain fondness for the Britain of Toryism and Enoch Powell: a politician who seemed marked out for the cause of Anglo-French reconciliation in the 1970's. Such a reconciliation would mean the sharing of Britain's nuclear arsenal with that of France, but once the Big Two had come to terms, there would be no difficulty about that. If Washington and Moscow were willing to cooperate, then why should Europe not concentrate on its own affairs? And if Europe included Britain, then why should a British government not pool its nuclear forces with those of the Continent? *Pour quoi faire? Mais mon Dieu, pour ne rien faire!* A federalized Europe would be a neutral Europe. Did anyone suppose that West Europeans would volunteer to serve in a war against China? They had not even sent a battalion to Vietnam!

EVERY AGE has its own cant. Ours is that of "pragmatism," a phrase designed to conceal the fact that the old conservative-liberal ideologies are dying and nothing else has yet taken their place. Technocracy? But how can one glamorize it? Call it "socialism" or what you will, but don't go about proclaiming that henceforth the world is going to be run by astronauts and such-like characters, not to mention nuclear physicists or prophets like Herman Kahn. Technocracy is a state of affairs, and pragmatism is a state of mind. Neither represents a system of beliefs, and people have to believe in something: France, Europe, America, the Soviet Union, the Cultural Revolution, Black Power, or what-you-will. Technocracy fills the vacuum left by the disappearance of liberal democracy in its 19th-century form, but it is not something that anyone is going to shed blood for. This was the hard core of sense in de Gaulle's sneers about the "stateless bureaucrats" in charge of the Common Market. Europe? A splendid ideal, but not at the expense of France if you please. France has been there for a thousand years and men have died for it. This is how nations are born. It is still true. If Biafra ever becomes a nation, it will have been at the cost of blood. Not to mention Israel . . . ("Of course they are admirable people," the General blandly remarked to protesting Gaullists the day after he had imposed the arms embargo . . .) Are the Europeans ready to die for Europe? One doubts it.

At Colombey the old soldier now has time to complete his memoirs, while his successors divide his heritage. For the rest one may be sure he will carry on as usual: thinking of France and despising the French. "They will return to their vomit," he said contemptuously some years ago, when asked what would happen to the country after his departure. They have in fact decided to go forward so as to become part of the modern world, and while the process is not quite complete, it is far enough advanced to make it improbable that anyone can reverse it. Now that the archaic armature of Gaullism has been removed, the lineaments of a new society are becoming discernible. Strange to relate, it is a society not greatly different from the new Germany across the Rhine. When the historians get down to the writing of this chapter, they are likely to conclude that Charles de Gaulle presided over a transformation that spelled the death of everything in which he believed.

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On Walter Benjamin

Robert Alter

"FOR THE CRITIC," Walter Benjamin once wrote, "the highest court of appeal is his own colleagues. Not the public. Even less posterity." The statement reflects the stance of intellectual rigor and self-skeptical inner distance that Benjamin maintained toward everything he cared about seriously—literary criticism, literary experience itself and its future in an age of technology and mass societies, Marxism (though perhaps here there were lapses in the rigor), Zionism, European culture, Jewish tradition and its theological categories of vision. The statement also suggests something of the retrospective irony that historical circumstances have cast on Benjamin's life and career, for it is only posterity that is now realizing, prominently in Germany, rather dimly elsewhere, his stature as a critic.

When Benjamin took his own life in September 1940, after having been turned back at the Spanish border in his flight from Nazi-occupied France, he was already, at the age of forty-eight, what would be generally recognized only posthumously, the major German literary critic of his time. His friend Bertolt Brecht is reported to have called his death the first real loss to German literature caused by Hitler. At the time, however, his importance was sensed only in a few limited circles of German intellectuals, some of them Marxists, most of them Jewish. Benjamin had begun publishing his criticism in periodicals less than a decade before Hitler's rise to power; after 1933, of course, he had no outlet in Germany, and the Swiss publisher that had undertaken to print a volume of his selected essays went bankrupt, leaving almost the entire edition stored in a basement where it would be discovered more than twenty years after the author's death. An additional irony, one that might have been felt keenly by Benjamin himself, was the fact that he was also for the most part neglected in France, where he lived after 1933, though he had devoted a substantial part of his intellectual effort to French literature, had made Baudelaire and Proust defining figures in his critical conception of modern experience, and Paris the focal point for his vision of 19th-century culture.

The emergence of Benjamin from the honorable underground of unrecognized genius began signally in 1955 with the publication in Frankfurt of a two-volume edition of his writings. Since then he has been the subject of numerous articles in German periodicals, sections of not yet collected works have appeared in periodicals, and German literary intellectuals, especially the younger ones, have come to see him as possessing the same stature in German criticism between the two wars that Brecht has in the German theater of that period. Outside Germany, his reputation has advanced much more slowly, to say the least. A selection of his essays published in France in 1959 received so little attention that the publisher abandoned the plan to bring out a second volume. Now, a generous sampling of Benjamin's literary criticism has been translated into English for the first time*; the essays included give ample evidence of one of the most original critical minds of recent decades, and the book ought to have the impact of a revelation in literary circles here, but so far it seems to have been greeted mainly with silence.

All this suggests that Hannah Arendt is right in attributing Benjamin's failure to receive adequate recognition during his lifetime more to the radical peculiarity of his literary enterprise, the anomalousness of what he sought to achieve, than to the historical circumstances of his career. The problem is not Benjamin's "difficulty," though he is at times alternatingly—even simultaneously—difficult and lucid because he combines the poet's sense of dramatic verbal gesture with a metaphysician's love of abstractions; the real problem, as Hannah Arendt argues, lies in Benjamin's incommensurability. Because he does not fit readily into any familiar category or recognizable tradition —a German-trained mind enamored of French modes of literary discourse, moving from theological concerns to literary texts with a professed allegiance to dialectical materialism!—one naturally gropes for rubrics that will cover him. Hannah Arendt proposes that we consider Benjamin above all as a man who *thought poetically* (her italics), that is, thought primarily through metaphor; and while this may be at least partly

* *Illuminations*. Translated by Harry Zohn. Edited with an introduction by Hannah Arendt. Harcourt, Brace & World, 281 pp., $5.95.

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true, I wonder how helpful a classification it is, how it enables us to distinguish Benjamin from critics as different as Coleridge and Valéry, for whom there is also no profound disjuncture between critical and poetical thinking.

Gershom Scholem, the distinguished historian of Jewish mysticism, in an important essay on Benjamin,* his intimate friend from student days on, is not moved to exercise the same ingenuity of analysis one finds in Arendt, but his more obvious generalization seems closer to the mark: Benjamin, Scholem contends, was fundamentally a metaphysician, in fact a rare instance of the "metaphysician pure and simple." What I assume Scholem means is that although Benjamin's mind was continually and passionately engaged in literary texts, he never explicated them, only intermittently commented on or evaluated them, but instead used them as points of departure (and of return) for larger speculations. What interested him about literary modes, about literature itself and language itself, was above all their ontology. I should hasten to add that this makes Benjamin sound more abstract than he is in fact; rhetorically, his argument is often articulated through the most vividly concrete particulars, and conceptually, he has an acute sense of the complex historical moment and its bearing on the arts, so that an ontology of literature for him is always deeply implicated in a sociology and anthropology of literature, and never separated from the imaginative feel of the particular literary experience.

THE DISPARITY between Arendt's Benjamin and Scholem's Benjamin is worth pursuing. Arendt's introductory essay inevitably draws on Scholem since, as Benjamin's confidant and closest correspondent over the years, he is an invaluable source of biographical and bibliographical information; but Arendt speaks of Scholem with a peculiar mixture of overt respect and muted suspicion. Clearly, much of her suspicion is of Scholem as representing the Jewish and Zionist pole in Benjamin's life. It is on the question of the relevance of Benjamin's Jewishness to his intellectual endeavor that the two stand farthest apart, and that issue is bound to be one of the most elusive yet crucial considerations in any attempt to place Benjamin.

This metaphysical critic of German and French letters wrote virtually nothing on explicitly Jewish matters, yet, by all testimonies, he was continually concerned with questions of Jewish tradition, Jewish identity, and Zionism as both a national and personal alternative. Scholem attests to his repeated, animated involvement with these subjects in conversation, and even reports one discussion in Paris in 1927 with Judah Magnes, the first president of the Hebrew University, in which Benjamin asserted that if he came to Palestine, he envisaged his eventual role as a commentator of traditional Jewish texts. Though Arendt undertakes a rather ample biographical sketch of Benjamin in her introduction, she scarcely mentions any of this, nor does her survey of Benjamin's intellectual sources intimate what we know from Scholem, that Benjamin read seriously in the history of the Kabbalah, that he was deeply impressed with the theology of Franz Rosenzweig (whom he quotes a number of times in his essays), and that he could even evince great enthusiasm, at least at an early age, for Ahad Ha-am, whom he read in German translation.

These omissions are significant, for Arendt sees Benjamin's Jewishness primarily as a sociological fact, and a negative one, while in Scholem's view strands of Judaism as a philosophical vision are woven into the fabric of Benjamin's thought through its underlying concern with revelation, redemption, tradition, and the role of language in the interplay of these three categories. Scholem describes the Judaism of messianic expectation as a goal Benjamin "approached asymptomatically throughout his life, without ever attaining it." Arendt's view, on the other hand, would seem to follow closely that of the French critic, Pierre Missac, who in an intelligent general essay on Benjamin,† turns Scholem's image around and suggests that Benjamin was carried away from Judaism by the inexorable winds of history though he never entirely freed himself from it.

For Hannah Arendt, at any rate, what Benjamin's Jewishness chiefly gives him is an energy of disengagement. Like other German Jewish writers of the earlier 20th century, Benjamin emerged from the asphyxiating milieu—ably described by Arendt—of the Central-European Jewish *haute bourgeoisie,* knowing himself to be neither fully a German nor, in his parents' sense, a Jew; he therefore was able to sharpen his social and moral perceptions through the very denial of the smugness, the hypocrisies, and the appalling self-deceptions that surrounded him. Zionism, then, according to Arendt, was for Benjamin primarily a means of affirming the essential rottenness and wrongness of Jewish existence in Europe, just as Marxism served to affirm for him much the same thing about the entire bourgeois order; but he could never go all the way either to Jerusalem or to Moscow because all he could honestly take from the two ideologies was a perspective of radical critique, never a solution to the insoluble.

This is a shrewdly argued view that carries with it some weight of justice, but I suspect that it fails to account adequately for an impulse other than the negative one in Benjamin, and finally makes out of him more of a prophet of doom than he actually was. And one must add that Hannah Arendt is not above distorting biograph-

* "Walter Benjamin," *Yearbook of the Leo Baeck Institute,* 1965.

† *"L'Eclat et le secret: Walter Benjamin," Critique,* August-September, 1966.

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ical facts in the interest of her thesis. Thus, she claims that Benjamin, improvident about financial matters, was prepared, or at least thought he was, to hire himself out to "the Marxists" for 1000 French francs a month, or alternately, "to study Hebrew for three hundred marks a month if the Zionists thought it could do them some good." The most generous assumption one can make about this story is that it is a gross misrepresentation: Scholem and others had been interested in bringing Benjamin to teach at the Hebrew University, but from the language used here we are led to infer an equation between becoming an intellectual prostitute for a vicious Stalinist propaganda machine (something utterly inconceivable for Benjamin), and serving as a tool for a different ideological clique of unsavory manipulators known as "the Zionists." Such moments make one wonder how reliable a guide to Benjamin Hannah Arendt can be, at least in regard to his Jewishness and his relationship with Zionism.

PERHAPS WE CAN better focus the whole perplexed image of Benjamin by devoting some attention to the actual nature and direction of his critical writing. If Benjamin's achievement is somehow incommensurable, it is certainly not incomparable, and here I believe a comparison may offer a useful perspective on him. Of the critics who rose to prominence in America and England in the earlier 20th century, during that great age of letters which preceded our own, I can think of only two who equal Benjamin in subtlety of analytic imagination, in intellectual independence and venturesomeness, and in the vigor of their interest in the interinvolvement of society and literature, of moral and aesthetic values; those two are Edmund Wilson and Lionel Trilling. Trilling will serve the purpose of comparison better because he happens to be a Jew, and a Jew whose cultural experience and allegiances are antithetical to Benjamin's in virtually every significant respect.

Now Trilling has throughout his career taken an honorable course toward his Jewish origins, whatever ambivalence he may have felt and sometimes expressed, by openly affirming them, hardly enthusiastically but with a certain sense of self-respect. (It is worth recalling that his earliest criticism and fiction, in the later 20's, appeared in a Jewish periodical, the *Menorah Journal*.) Nevertheless, what is remarkable about Trilling in this regard is that his career is such an achieved process of hyper-acculturation. It is a process that was never possible for Jews in Europe either socially or psychologically, that has not been generally felt to be necessary in this country since the 30's, and that could only have been achieved then by a gifted spirit. Trilling at twenty-one, writing, paradoxically, for the *Menorah Journal*, could on occasion sound offensively like a mock-Englishman—as, indeed, some of his disciples, unconsciously parodying him, sometimes still sound today—but by the time he comes to his mature work in the late 30's and 40's, the "mock" component has quite disappeared: the son of East-European Jewish immigrants has accomplished what would hardly occur to an American intellectual of Protestant background to attempt, has implicated his thought and feeling so deeply and finely in the British cultural tradition that in the quality of his imagination and the nature of its assumptions, in the poise and cadences of his prose, in all the minute calibrations of his intellectual life, he is thoroughly a spiritual compatriot of Coleridge, Wordsworth, Newman, Matthew Arnold.

One could hardly imagine a more striking contrast to Benjamin, that scarcely German critic of German and French literature, inventing his own peculiar variety of masterfully aphoristic German prose, working toward a definition of modern European culture at least partly through his distance from it as a Jew, all the while wondering whether he ought not to learn Hebrew, follow his friend Scholem to Jerusalem, and there become a latter-day Rashi or Ibn Ezra. In order to show how this contrast enters into the specific nature of the criticism itself, I would like to set side by side some parallel observations by each of the writers. Here, to begin with, is an instance where both critics have arrived independently at what looks like much the same insight. The Trilling quotation is from his justly famous essay, "Manners, Morals, and the Novel":

> Snobbery is pride in status without pride in function. And it is an uneasy pride of status. It always asks, "Do I belong—do I really belong? And does he belong? And if I am observed talking to him, will it make me seem to belong or not to belong?" It is the peculiar vice not of aristocractic societies which have their own appropriate vices, but of bourgeois democratic societies.

And here is Benjamin, commenting on the central importance of the analysis of snobbery in Proust's critique of society:

> For the attitude of the snob is nothing but the consistent, organized, steely view of life from the chemically pure standpoint of the consumer. . . . But the pure consumer is the pure exploiter—logically and theoretically—and in Proust he is that in the full concreteness of his actual historical existence. He is concrete because he is impenetrable and elusive. Proust describes a class which is everywhere pledged to camouflage its material basis and for this very reason is attached to a feudalism which has no intrinsic economic significance but is all the more serviceable as a mask of the upper middle class.

The most obvious differences in formulation

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are the differences between the idiom of British empiricism and a self-critical liberalism on the one hand, and of an imaginative Marxism, on the other hand, with its characteristically Central European interest in theory. What preoccupies Trilling is a question of moral psychology, and so his exposition flows quite naturally into hypothetical speech: "How would I feel, what would I tell myself, if I were in such and such a position?" What concerns Benjamin here is a matter of social philosophy, and in keeping with that perspective he brings to bear a more emphatically analytical power of generalization. Marxism, of course, helps him establish swift, precise connections among social attitudes, class structures, and their economic bases, though one senses in the legislative generalizations a controlled note of personally perceived moral outrage that is worlds away from the self-righteousness of parlor-and-campus radicals or the mouthing of formulas by party hacks. Marxist theory is clearly useful to Benjamin, but his sensibility and the nature of his interests continually push him beyond it, and even here his language reflects a profound dissatisfaction not merely with the particular structures of bourgeois society but with the very imagination of human life upon a material base. (In general, the question of whether Marxism was finally a constructive element in Benjamin's intellectual enterprise remains to be resolved. Hannah Arendt, for example, is skeptical about Scholem's assertion that Brecht and his radicalism were a "baleful influence" in Benjamin's life, but what else is one to conclude when Brecht was capable of objecting to as brilliant a piece of criticism as Benjamin's essay on Kafka because it "gave aid and comfort to Jewish fascism"?)

In any case, the characteristic that sets apart Benjamin's formulation most decisively from Trilling's is its emphasis on paradox, and paradox typically expressed with an aggressive, gnomic compression—the pure consumer is the pure exploiter, and he is concrete because he is impenetrable and elusive. Paradox in general is a rhetorical form that originates in a tension of ideas in the mind of the speaker and is usually meant to elicit some state of tension in the audience; for Benjamin that tension carries with it some of the threatening quality with which his subject presents itself to his imagination. Trilling, one feels, can write about the phenomenon of snobbery with reasonable detachment, as though from a relatively protected position: he is finely aware of both the destructiveness and the inner emptiness implicit in what he is talking about, at the same time that he regards it coolly as one of the besetting ills of a highly imperfect though obviously livable form of social organization.

There is, by contrast, something more uncompromising in Benjamin's sharper formulation of the contradictions of the phenomenon; one might say that he writes about his subject from a condition of naked exposure to it. The more enigmatic of his paradoxes here—that concreteness flows from impenetrability and elusiveness—would seem to be very much the shrewd and pained insight of an outsider, who senses the elaborate overlay of forms, styles, mores, of a self-protecting class as a cover for its lack of inner coherence and definition. Trilling makes virtually the same observation when, at the end of the paragraph from which I have quoted, he describes the dominant emotion of snobbery as a "sense that one is not quite real but can in some way acquire reality"; Benjamin's decision, however, to cast this idea in the paradoxical form he gives it has the effect of implicating the reader, too, in the experience of bafflement and exclusion of someone trying to penetrate a resistant snobbish milieu. It is a way of seeing things, I would venture, that makes special sense for a Jew always consciously Jewish in a Central European cultural situation.

THIS CONTRAST between the psychologically protected, acculturated critic and the exposed, unassimilable one has to do not merely with their identity as Jews but with the kind of literary tradition to which each relates. Here a comparison of comments on a literary genre rather than a social phenomenon may be helpful in locating the difference between the two. At the end of "Manners, Morals, and the Novel," Trilling offers this summarizing generalization about the distinctive nature of the novel:

> Its greatness and its practical usefulness lay in its unremitting work of involving the reader himself in the moral life, inviting him to put his own motives under examination, suggesting that reality is not as his conventional education has led him to see it. It taught us, as no other genre ever did, the extent of human variety and the value of this variety. It was the literary form to which the emotions of understanding and forgiveness were indigenous, as if by the definition of the form itself.

And Benjamin, in a finely suggestive essay called "The Storyteller," which argues that the art of storytelling is dying out because of the demise of "the epic side of truth, wisdom," contrasts the characteristically modern narrative genre, the novel, with the traditional story:

> The birthplace of the novel is the solitary individual, who is no longer able to express himself by giving examples of his most important concerns, is himself uncounseled, and cannot counsel others. To write a novel means to carry the incommensurable to extremes in the representation of human life. In the midst of life's fullness, and through the representation of this fullness, the novel gives evidence of the profound perplexity of the living.

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Trilling's notion of human variety is not unrelated to Benjamin's sense of mankind's "perplexity" (*Ratlosigkeit* in the original is a shade stronger—the state of being at a loss, even helpless), but the general orientation of the two is radically different. In context, both critics, quite properly, make *Don Quixote* the ultimate point of reference in their conception of the novel, but Trilling is closer to the rationalist 18th-century view of *Quixote*, seeing it almost as an embryonic novel of education in which the reader becomes a discriminating observer of the interplay between appearance and reality, while Benjamin, in this respect resembling rather the Romantic interpreters of Cervantes's novel, seems to locate its center more in the striking and dangerous implications of the Don's madness. Trilling, with a secure base of orientation in the rich profusion of English culture since the Renaissance, regards the novel from his viewpoint of social critic and moral psychologist as an extraordinary instrument of self-knowledge. Benjamin the metaphysician, always with a strong sense of pre-modern culture and its theological anchorage, sees the novel more as what the late R.P. Blackmur called a "technique of trouble," a means of ruthlessly exposing the most deep-seated insoluble predicaments of modern existence. (It is worth noting, incidentally, how characteristically Benjamin's mind operates quite outside the prefabricated structures of Marxist theory. His idea here that the distinctive mimetic purpose of the novel is "to carry the incommensurable to extremes in the representation of human life" has an originality and breadth of suggestiveness that cannot be matched in Marxist theorists of the novel like Georg Lukacs and Lucien Goldmann.)

TRILLING's conception of the novel leads us from Cervantes to Fielding to Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James, E. M. Forster, while with Benjamin's uncounseled, solitary individual we move from Cervantes to Stendhal, Flaubert, Melville, Dostoevsky, Kafka. One would look in vain for the pushing of the incommensurable to extremes in the moral education of Emma Woodhouse, as one would look in vain for understanding and forgiveness in the harshly unrelenting moral exposure of Emma Bovary. The difference, of course, is in part a simple difference between Continental and British literary experience, between a literature created against a background of despotism, changing regimes, violent revolution, and one created in a parliamentary democracy under conditions of slow, often drastically inadequate, but nevertheless peaceful reform. Trilling, so much at home in the British tradition, seems in some ways emotionally cushioned against the vast shock-waves of modernity that have been running through Western culture since the 17th century; Benjamin, partly because of his intense self-awareness as a Jew though obviously not only for that reason, feels the earth quaking beneath his feet, beneath all of us, and makes his criticism into a seismographic reading of the quake, while never totally abandoning faith in the instruments of reason and the redemptive possibilities of human culture.

The ultimate importance of Benjamin's critical enterprise may well be that it gives us one of the most far-reaching, abidingly relevant definitions of modernity that any critic has articulated, and the emphasis placed in his definition on the decline of wisdom is noteworthy. We are all wearily familiar with notions of modern experience as a failure of faith, a breakdown of values, a loss of community, but to put all those negative processes in terms of a loss of wisdom introduces rather new implications. In this view, what man needs to sustain himself above all else is not belief or a particular kind of social organization but *learning*. Human communities depend ultimately on being the bearers of living traditions, where there is something of growing substance that master imparts to disciple, one generation to the next, and so for Benjamin one of the most crucial symptoms of modernity is the erosion of tradition. Wisdom, learning, and tradition hardly seem Marxist categories, and they are of course not uniquely Jewish ones, but they must have presented themselves with peculiar force to the imagination of a writer keenly aware of the Jewish past, who had closely read Rosenzweig, Buber's versions of the Hasidic masters, and the history of the Kabbalah.

In order to make still clearer the distinctive perspective Benjamin brings to bear on the modern condition as a self-aware European Jew, I would like to offer one last comparison—of an extended observation of his with one of Trilling's on the paradigmatic modern writer, Kafka. Admittedly, the comparison is bound to be a little unfair to Trilling because Kafka does not sit very comfortably within the compass of his sensibility, while there are profound affinities between Kafka and Benjamin—cultural, intellectual, and above all spiritual affinities. Precisely for that reason however, one can see the startling difference between the two critics in their relationship to modern experience and its historical antecedents. Trilling, contrasting Kafka with Hawthorne in the course of an essay on Hawthorne, has this to say about the German writer:

> Of Kafka's power an impressive index is the fact that his version of man's dark odyssey proceeds without touching upon cases of conscience. In such relations between man and man as are represented in Kafka's work, it is never a possibility that one man can help or injure another. . . . What an intransigence of imagination is needed to conceive man's spiritual life as having no discernible connection with morality! . . . An imagination so boldly autonomous, once it has brought itself into being, con-

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ceives of nothing that can throw it off its stride. Like the dream, it confronts subjective fact only, and there are no aesthetically unsuccessful dreams, no failed nightmares.

Before going on to Benjamin, I might observe how peculiar a statement this is, peculiar especially in its uncharacteristic lack of accuracy. It is simply contrary to the facts of Kafka's books to say that no one in them can help or injure his fellow, and as for cases of conscience, some very intelligent Kafka specialists—Bluma Goldstein, for example—would claim that he scarcely writes about anything else. Trilling, of course, imagines the case of conscience as it would occur in a novel by Henry James, without seeming to allow that there are other, more terribly imperative or darkly submerged ways in which moral alternatives can present themselves to a character conceived by his creator as a morally responsible agent. The notion of a boldly autonomous imagination is more convincing, though even here Trilling moves a little too easily into invoking the model of the dream because he stands so completely outside Kafka's own cultural and literary context. By contrast, Benjamin's characterization of Kafka's imagination in a letter to Scholem is packed with ideas that seem utterly persuasive:

> Kafka's real genius was that he tried something entirely new: he sacrificed truth for the sake of clinging to its transmissibility, its aggadic element. Kafka's writings are by their nature parables. But it is their misery and their beauty that they had to become *more* than parables. They do not modestly lie at the feet of the doctrine, as the Aggadah lies at the feet of the Halakhah. Though apparently reduced to submission, they unexpectedly raised a mighty paw against it.
>
> This is why, in regard to Kafka, we can no longer speak of wisdom. Only the products of its decay remain. There are two: one is the rumor about the true things (a sort of theological whispered intelligence dealing with matters discredited and obsolete); the other product of this diathesis is folly—which, to be sure, has utterly squandered the substance of wisdom, but preserves its attractiveness and assurance, which rumor invariably lacks.

This analysis brilliantly illustrates why talk about Kafka's fiction as dream and nightmare is finally loose talk. Dreamlike elements, to be sure, are abundant enough (but are they so rare in older kinds of fiction?); the close-worked structure of the parable, however, is the antithesis to the associative flow of the dream, even when the expected didactic content of the parable is obscure, or elusive, or ironically negated by the parable's narrative form. What Benjamin perceives is that Kafka, far from imagining spiritual life as having no connection with morality, writes out of a sense of desperation that the legitimating source of morality may have disappeared, and the "intransigence" of his imagination is precisely an expression of this desperation. He is a writer committed by his cultural tradition and the nature of his imagination to be, in Benjamin's sense, a storyteller, trapped in the era of the novel; language remains for him the medium of wisdom, learning, and tradition at a point in time when the chain of tradition has broken, with no certain wisdom left to impart. Because Benjamin is in some significant respects the same kind of Jew as Kafka, he is able to understand completely the strange beauty and terror of this response to modernity in Kafka as Trilling cannot. Kafka's parabolic fictions, in Benjamin's profound view of them, are not, most essentially, dreams or theological allegories or enigmatic psychograms or prophetic myths, but a body of Aggadah in search of a Halakhah, lore in quest of Law, yet so painfully estranged from what it seeks that the pursuit can end in a pounce of destruction, the fictional rending the doctrinal.

I am led to wonder whether Benjamin's analysis of Kafka has not touched on the most basic point of substantive contact between Kafka and Agnon, who has been compared so frequently to the German writer. (Benjamin, interestingly, was personally acquainted with Agnon, and in his correspondence he speaks in the highest terms of praise about the Agnon stories he read in German translation.) Agnon is much more of a ventriloquist of age-old tradition than Kafka, and so his own Aggadah has often seemed to speak for the eternally revealed Halakhah, but many of his boldest, most compelling fictions assume in their own way the masks and gestures of wisdom, learning, and tradition in a world where, manifestly, tradition has become a musty smell, wisdom a madman's guess or a bad joke, and learning a futile reflex. According to a Hasidic tale that Agnon himself, among others, has transmitted, the Baal Shem Tov used to go to a certain spot in the forest when he had something difficult to perform, where he would light a fire, then accomplish the task through prayer. His disciple, the Maggid of Meseritz, could no longer light the fire, but at least he knew the appointed place and the prayer to recite. A generation later, Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sassov had lost the secret of the prayer as well, but he still knew his way to the place in the forest. At the end of the line, Rabbi Israel of Rizhyn, the great-grandson of the Maggid, could neither light the fire nor say the prayer nor find his way into the forest, but at least he could tell the story. This is very much the condition of Kafka, and of Agnon, left to tell stories when what is urgently needed is the secret path, the holy fire, the divine words. Benjamin was preeminently a critic who knew what such storytelling meant, and understood in all its ramifications the condition of being bereft of fire in the trackless dark of this world.

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IN ORDER to define that condition against the historical background of modern experience, Benjamin repeatedly invokes a process which he calls the decline of aura. The concept is worth commenting on because it is central to his critical orientation, indeed, to what could justifiably be called his critical vision. Benjamin has a fine comprehension of the ways in which urbanization, industrialization, and the development of new communications media profoundly affect man's modes of perception, his relationship to objects, to people, and to his own consciousness. These changing relationships are alluded to frequently in his discussion of literary figures and confronted directly in a major essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." The root implications of an era of global television and space telemetry are already firmly grasped in this response to the early period of the sound movie; whatever of Marshall McLuhan is worth keeping is contained in two or three sentences here of Benjamin's, though of course with a clarity of historical perspective one would not look for in McLuhan.

What is intriguing about Benjamin's view of this whole process is the peculiar ambivalence he maintains toward it. He is obviously fascinated, perhaps even excited, by the movement of modernization, from its early impact on Baudelaire with his new aesthetic of shock, to its ultimate issue in the modern art of the cinema. At times he appears to see redemptive possibilities in the processes of modernization, as when he imagines the film as the means of making the critical experience of art for the first time available to the masses. More often, and perhaps despite himself, he describes those processes as a progressive erosion of what is most preciously human in human experience.

Thus, in his essay on Baudelaire, Benjamin conveys a sequence of negative change with succint finality: "The replacement of the older narration by information, of information by sensation, reflects the increasing atrophy of experience." And even in the essay on art and mechanical reproduction, there is a curious ambiguity of judgment. The growing impulse "to get hold of an object at very close range by way of its likeness, its reproduotion," is interpreted as an "adjustment of reality to the masses and of the masses to reality," which, for a good Marxist, should surely be an encouraging development. But Benjamin chooses to describe the process in language like this: "To pry an object from its shell, to destroy its aura, is the mark of a perception whose 'sense of the universal equality of things' has increased to such a degree that it extracts it even from a unique object by means of reproduction." Despite the calm tone of theoretical analysis, one gets a sense of a kind of rape perpetrated, uniqueness and separateness violated, a tyrannic perception of the universal equality of things imposing itself on a world once suffused with aura.*

Roughly, the distance between Benjamin's hopefulness and his dismay about the modern world is the distance between his Marxism and his Judaism. Some words of explanation about his concept of aura may make this connection clearer. He seems to have conceived aura alternately, and complementarily, in psychological and anthropological terms. Psychologically, to sense the aura of things is to experience them as objects of the imagination, inexhaustibly desirable and inexhaustibly delighting; it is to see things as Wordsworth evoked them in the *Immortality Ode*, "Apparelled in celestial light,/The glory and the freshness of a dream" (the precise meaning of "glory" in Wordsworth's English is "aura"). Or, to suggest a more explicitly theological parallel, Benjamin talking about aura in the natural world sounds very much like Buber describing a displacement of the I-it by the I-thou: "Experience of the aura . . . rests on the transposition of a response common in human relationships to the relationship between the inanimate or natural object and man. The person we look at, or who feels he is being looked at, looks at us in turn." Paradoxically, when Benjamin describes the same experience elsewhere more from a viewpoint of historical anthropology, he emphasizes not rapport or intimacy but distance and unapproachability, defining aura as "the unique phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be." The paradox is a characteristic piece of brilliant shrewdness in working with the kind of idea that would tempt many thinkers into soft-minded effusion. Aura means access to the kind of intimate closeness possible only when what we relate to relates at the same time to us, but aura also means inviolability, the awareness of a perfect uniqueness utterly beyond the realm of utility or manipulation, and so the object possessing aura has built-in distance, however close we come to it.

Benjamin thus relates aura to what he calls the "cult image" of objects, which, in direct contrast to the mechanically reproduced image, can never be separated from the object's presence, can never be distributed, broadcast, enlarged, cut up, pasted over, absorbed into the helpless world of merely used things. The existence of aura, then, presupposes a sacral, perhaps ultimately theological, view of reality. Benjamin was, it should be stressed, intensely alive to the new possibilities of art after the decay of aura, astutely observing the substitution of shock for aura and the willful destruction of empathy in Baudelaire and modern poetry after him, in Brecht's Epic Theater,

* As a fascinating gloss on Benjamin's essay, I would recommend Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading*, written in Berlin just a year earlier (1935), in which photography is used as the most perfectly appropriate art form in an ideal model of the totalitarian state.

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and in films. But when he talks about the "atrophy of experience" he means the atrophy of aura, which thus becomes not a neutral process but an ultimate disaster of modern culture: Benjamin is perhaps closest to his spiritual kinsman Kafka in being unable, or unwilling, to accept a reality stripped of its sacral dimension.

THIS underlying commitment to a vision of life rooted in theological values helped Benjamin to comprehend modern processes of cultural breakdown more vividly than he might otherwise have done; at the same time it is a chief source of a quality in his own work that he once attributed to Kafka, a strange "radiant serenity" that informs his writing even in its chillingly apocalyptic passages. This is a surprising enough quality to find in any writer with such a raw nerve of response to the disturbing nature of modern experience, even more surprising in someone at his time and place. For the entire span of Benjamin's literary activity is less than two decades, and his most productive, original period was from 1933 to the last months before his death. One marvels at the man's dedication to his calling, the way he could in grim exile patiently pursue the definition of European culture, of art and language, at a time when a new mobilized barbarism threatened to engulf everything he cared about and sought to understand. Scholem, in a recent reminiscence,* has suggested that the reason Benjamin could not bring himself to leave Europe for Palestine, even at the eleventh hour, was that he could not abandon his work at the Bibliothèque Nationale on the book he would never complete, *Paris, Capitol of the 19th Century.*

As a Jew, Benjamin was never fully part of an indigenous stream of European culture—thus the logic of his Zionism—but for the same reason he was of European culture as a whole, committed, one might say, to the idea of European culture. "Even in the hour of death," according to a Talmudic dictum, "you should devote yourself to the study of the Law," and the statement could serve as an apt image of Benjamin in his last years. His writing, that is, implicitly affirms the ultimate importance of the kind of "study" he had set as his lifework, and its radiant serenity derives in part from that affirmation, made as it is by an extraordinarily supple and original mind confidently aware of its own powers even when delineating the dimensions of chaos.

Benjamin is acutely conscious of the forms assumed by chaos in our political, moral, and spiritual lives, but, unlike so many modern writers, he is not secretly enamored of chaos in any way, and that is the other source, to which I referred first, of his paradoxical serenity. As a thoroughly modern imagination, he devoted most of his critical attention to those writers and those cultural phenemona through which he could trace the decline of aura, through which, that is, he could honestly confront the world around him. Yet what attracts him most profoundly is the possibility of life imbued with aura; it is a possibility that the literature of the past and the exercise of the imagination keep alive for him. And what fascinates him most about modern writers is the ability of a few of them to devise strategems for recapturing at least an oblique glint of aura, or for creating the simulacrum of it. Thus, he is drawn to Valéry both for the critical statement and the poetic application of the idea that "artistic observation can attain an almost mystical depth"; to Kafka, who surrenders truth to retain its transmissibility, in whom storytelling assumes its old Scheherazadean purpose of postponing the future, fending off death; to Nikolai Leskov, whose fiction preserves something from the immemorial wisdom of the traditional teller of tales.

Benjamin's quest in literature for even the bittersweet residue of bliss is clearest of all in his involvement with the work of Proust. He is, to be sure, aware of Proust as a critic of society and a poet of decay, but his own persuasively stated emphasis is on what he describes as the "elegiac form" of a "will to happiness" in Proust. The intricately elaborated, sensuously realized image in Proust is the French novelist's way of rescuing fragments from a remembered world bathed in aura: "He lay on his bed racked with homesickness, homesick for the world distorted in the state of resemblance, a world in which the true surrealist face of existence breaks through. To this world belongs what happens in Proust, and the deliberate and fastidious way in which it happens." As elsewhere, Benjamin perceives so well because he himself feels much the same thing. His sense of homesickness, cultural and, ultimately, theological, makes more intelligible his attachment to Marxist messianism, to Zionism, to the Jewish past, and to the 19th century. Homesickness, however, is the etymological equivalent of nostalgia and all too easily leads to nostalgic excesses. Benjamin's greatness as a critic is, finally, his ability to preserve an absolutely unsentimental lucidity in his existential homesickness, and thus to perceive through it both the precise configurations of modern experience and the shape and substance of a wholeness to which the human spirit, even as it plots its own subversion, still stubbornly aspires.

* *"Erinnerungen an Walter Benjamin," Der Monat,* September 1966.

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"I am one of those machines which can explode."

SELECTED LETTERS OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Edited and translated by Christopher Middleton

Cast in the popular mind as the evil genius of the 19th Century and the ultimate anti-Semitic German nationalist, Nietzsche (1844-1900) has been misunderstood, misquoted, misused, and maligned. With a fine sensitivity for "the man behind the immoralist, behind the visionary, behind the terrorist of metaphysical revolt," Christopher Middleton has assembled letters which at last give readers a ground plan of the dark chambers of the subterranean labyrinth that was Nietzsche's mind. Voluntarily isolated from friends—who at one time included Richard Wagner—and from all humanity, his life was a lonely journey to insanity. Through these letters one feels in the very presence of Nietzsche.

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Paper Politics

THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER. By GAY TALESE. *World. 555 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by JOSEPH EPSTEIN

THE NEW YORK TIMES is far and away America's greatest newspaper. Its owners, executives, and upper-echelon editors know this and exult in the fact. They do not appear to know that the distinction is rather a dubious one, for to be America's greatest newspaper these days is a little like being the best high-jumper in a school for paraplegics. The country's newspapers are onto lean days, and a sure sign of this is that they are no longer able to attract the brighter young men into working for them, as they did in Dreiser's and Stephen Crane's or in Hemingway's day. At the moment it is safe to say that no American newspaper is harboring a young James Thurber, an A. J. Liebling, or a Joseph Mitchell, let alone a Dreiser, Crane, or Hemingway. The New York *Times* could not even accommodate the talents of David Halberstam, its most exceptional reporter of recent years, who, feeling his reportorial talents restricted, left the paper to write for magazines.

A number of factors have conspired to bring this about, but chief among them is that newspapers no longer seem as indispensable, and hence as exciting, as they once did. Most people in the normal course of events can keep reasonably well-informed without regularly consulting the daily press. By reading the mass-circulation and intellectual weeklies and monthlies, by watching television news, interviews, and documentaries, one probably has available to him as full a sense of the whole confused human enterprise as is required. To ask for more, indeed, seems almost to show a streak of masochism. Moreover, it is by no means clear that the general run of American newspapers provides more. Prose ineptly composed under the duress of daily deadlines and lavished on events ill-understood is far from a certain gain. Newspapers, in fact, no longer seem in any way above the clatter, but merely a part of it.

Do these strictures apply as well to the New York *Times*, the good gray lady of American journalism? They apply down the line, or so one is prepared to conclude from a reading of Gay Talese's *The Kingdom and the Power*. One of the central points to emerge from Talese's book, though it is by no means certain that the author himself would agree about this, is that the *Times* today is permeated by a strong stench of the second-rate. But then no one ever said the New York *Times*'s prestige derived from its superior quality. Not long ago in these pages,* George Lichtheim compared the paper's foreign reporting with that of Europe's leading newspapers and—to put the matter more softly than Mr. Lichtheim chose to—found the *Times* wanting. The paper's national and city desks tend to produce more in the way of amplitude than of excellence, and though on occasion they turn in distinguished performances—A. H. Raskin's coverage of the 1963 New York newspaper strike, say, or Tom Wicker's reporting of the Dallas assassination—more often than not one reads down long columns of print increasingly certain that there is a good deal less here than meets the eye. The *Times*'s cultural coverage has improved with the acquisition of Hilton Kramer and Clive Barnes, but the *Times Book Review* is still a very slack job. The strength of the *Times* lies finally not so much in its excellence as in its bulk; it is not that it is a particularly good newspaper but simply that is is more newspaper than anyone else cares to produce.

The *Times* outweighs the rest of the nation's press in another, more important respect—its influence, which is practically boundless. This is the real legacy of Adolph Ochs, whose family's control of the *Times* now reaches into the third generation. Ochs's approach to the news was earnest and completely humorless; he wanted the *Times* to be "the paper of record," he wanted the news reported in its pages without partiality, and he wanted *all* the news. Ochs got what he wanted, and in so doing achieved great power for the *Times*. He never used this power arrogantly, and indeed rarely overextended himself either financially or editorially. A prudent man by nature, he rocked no boats, made no waves. As Talese notes: "Ochs had not made a fortune out of the newspaper business by offending the mighty, crusading for reforms, espousing the causes of the have-nots against the haves." Although Ochs seldom interferred with his editors, he didn't really have to, so clearly did he make his will known on all matters of editorial policy. Nearly three-and-a-half decades after his death in 1935, the New York *Times*'s virtues are still Ochs's, as are its limitations.

The prestige Adolph Ochs earned for his newspaper even now continues to be spread around to all its employees, like some giant profit-sharing plan set up in perpetuity. If you are a *Times*-man, aisles everywhere clear, doors fling open, the State Department calls you—"the world," as Talese writes, "seems easier." The lure of these perquisites can scarcely be overestimated; in the great majority of instances, it is sufficient to dim any radical vision a reporter might have and stem any impulse toward irony in his reporting of the news.

Ochs built well. Thorny, idiosyncratic, or otherwise exceptional personalities have never flourished on the *Times*. Now as always,

JOSEPH EPSTEIN *contributed "Adlai Stevenson in Retrospect" to our December 1968 issue.*

* "All the News That's Fit to Print," September 1965.

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the *Times,* as Talese puts it, has "many fine reporters but almost no fine writers." If not as it should be, this is probably as Ochs intended. If every bureau chief and all the principal editors were to resign tomorrow, it is doubtful that the character of the paper would be radically altered. The New York *Times* is one of those rare institutions that create the men who work for it, not the other way around.

THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER is about an attempt to change the *Times*—specifically, about an attempt on the part of certain of the New York editors to divest the paper's Washington bureau of its long-held independent status as the most powerful of the *Times*'s many dukedoms. Great institutions, however, are changed only by stealth or revolution. In this instance, the method was stealth; the effort, abortive; the reverberations within the *Times,* catacylsmic; the net effect, some shifting of personnel and responsibilities, some changes in title—and business pretty much as usual. But on the single piece of intrigue which is the occasion for this book, Talese has hung an extremely readable history of the *Times,* an account of its mechanics and machinations, and a virtual glory-hole of gossip about its owners, editors, and reporters.

The last is not the least of the book's attractions. Thus we learn that as chief of the *Times* bureau in Mexico, Sydney Gruson owned and raced thoroughbreds; Craig Claiborne, the paper's food editor, keeps his weight down by never finishing everything on his plate; upon the death of an employee, Arthur Hays Sulzberger, Ochs's son-in-law and the most worldly of the *Times*'s publishers to date, sent a note of condolence both to the man's wife and to his mistress. *The Kingdom and the Power* is crammed with such stuff. Much of it is amusing, much is merely tedious. Its overall effect is twofold: first, the sheer density of anecdote and detail that Talese has dug up does make life at the *Times* palpably real; second, the whole business seems vastly overdone because Talese's cast of characters, the owners and employees of the *Times,* ultimately seems unworthy of such elaborate attention. Who, finally, cares about Punch Sulzberger's first marriage or that on a particular day at the Century Club Tom Wicker felt "the soft warm waves of martinis flowing within him as he ordered lunch"? Although in no sense can Talese be said to be an admirer of the men now at the *Times*—with the possible exception of Adolph Ochs, his book has no heroes, only antagonists—the principal effect of his extensive accounts of their lives is to corroborate their own excessive sense of self-importance.

Indeed, a sense of self-importance has never been in short supply on the *Times.* Among the scores of anecdotes Talese provides, one illustrates this very nicely. It has to do with a young reporter named John Corry who felt despondent after weeks of covering the Manchester-Kennedy affair, one of the really dreary non-events of recent years. Learning of Corry's despondence, Clifton Daniel, the managing editor, called him in to ask what he would like to do on the paper. When Corry said there was nothing he wanted to do, Daniel advised that he see the company psychiatrist. Now, it should be made clear that in doing this Daniel was being truly solicitous. But the real point of the story—a point Talese fails to draw—is to be found in Daniel's assumption that if a young journalist doesn't want to work on the New York *Times* he must be mentally disturbed.

Along with a strong sense of self-importance goes an atmosphere heavy with conspiracy. As described by Talese, the paper's offices have something of the quality of a little Kremlin—plots and power struggles are everywhere. Perhaps this is inevitable. In a situation like that at the *Times,* where the institution is more important than the people who work for it, and where everyone is therefore eminently dispensable, prerogatives are guarded like harem girls, men in positions of power mark off their small or large pieces of turf and are ready to fight to the death to hold them. Under such circumstances the instincts of a mafioso, though not written into the job description, are far from superfluous equipment. In this regard the *Times* is of course no worse than the majority of American corporations; what comes as news, however, is that neither is it much better. For years the New York *Times* has reflected the state of the world in its columns; now in its organization it reflects the society in which it has flourished.

The same might be said of its principal editors. Talese has put a great deal of energy into his portraits of the *Times* editors—to individuate them one from the other, to show what drives each of them, to get them all down on the page just right. He succeeds, and often brilliantly, or so at least other people who work for the *Times* confirm. And yet after all this careful portraiture, how interchangeable these men seem—*are*—with other common corporate types. It takes only the slightest effort of imagination to envision Turner Catledge at Ford or the Pentagon, Clifton Daniel as vice-president in charge of public relations at Revlon, A. M. Rosenthal as one of those clever young men on their way up at J. Walter Thompson.

IN TALESE'S long, involuted account of the struggles of these men for power, what is dismaying is how little those struggles have to do with any serious intellectual issues or questions of journalistic quality. What is at stake above all else is power, simple and naked. Strange things happen to a man when he becomes an editor of the *Times.* In agreeing to accept an editorship a man has also to agree in his own mind to swap the satisfactions of the by-line and the freedom of the reporter's life for the anonymous power of the executive. In so doing a man gives up his trade while retaining his ambition; where that ambition formerly might have driven him toward excellence in his craft, it now drives him toward power in his job, which at the *Times* means greater and greater control over larger and larger segments of the paper. This, of course, was what the effort of the New York editors to curtail the independence of the *Times*'s Washington bureau was

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really all about. Such issues as existed, if not invented in the first place, quickly receded to the background, and in the final analysis the outcome was decided on the basis of one man's having more clout with the publisher than another. As everyone now knows, the winner of this round was James Reston, who prevented the New York editors from installing their own man as head of the Washington bureau, and who himself became executive editor of the *Times*.

But it is hard to believe that other rounds will not follow. Under Adolph Ochs, the fight would probably not have begun at all, for Ochs had a very clear idea of what he wanted his newspaper to be, and this idea was translated in unmistakable terms to his editors. His grandson, the current publisher, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, enjoys no such clarity. Search *The Kingdom and the Power*'s 555 pages and you will still find no hint of the direction Mr. Sulzberger would like the *Times* to take in the future. Under the editorship (now vice-presidency) of James Reston, Talese reports, the paper is to become increasingly interested in "the news of the mind." But with Reston heading into his sixties and eventual retirement, the question of "whose mind" will soon be a pressing one. Already in Talese's last pages one can hear the rumblings of the next round of the struggle for power at the *Times*. Let us hope that whoever writes the story of this one has the energy and thoroughness of Gay Talese and, in addition, a quality the subject really deserves—more of the eye and touch of Evelyn Waugh.

A Forgotten Voice

HAYIM GREENBERG ANTHOLOGY. Edited by MARIE SYRKIN. *Wayne State University Press. 343 pp. $3.95.*

Reviewed by ARTHUR HERTZBERG

HAYIM GREENBERG appeared too late on the Russian Jewish scene—just before its virtual end in the October Revolution—and too early on the American Jewish scene—in the late 1920's and early 1930's—to affect the thinking of his contemporaries to the extent that he should have. As a very young man he fought unsuccessfully against the process by which the continuity of Russian Jewish life was being disrupted by the Bolsheviks. When he came to the United States in the 20's, the young were busy making their way into the American middle class. As a result, his fate was to speak almost exclusively to people older than himself, and for them to find him merely unconventional.

Greenberg's early years followed the pattern of his older contemporaries like Ahad Ha-am, Chaim Weizmann, and A. D. Gordon. Beginning with a rootedness in classical Jewish learning, each of these members of the first generation of worldly Jews worked out his own relationship to the Jewish heritage. In contrast to intellectuals like Isaac Deutscher, they did not leave the Jewish community. Instead, they viewed their task as one of making some sense out of the counterpulls of the new values and their Jewish commitments. All of them agreed on the right and necessity of the Jews to exist as a people, but none of them imagined that it would be enough to forge a Jewish identity that would be as "healthy" and "normal" as that of the Albanians or the Uzbeks. Their passion—and their burden—was the messianic sense that Jews could not be themselves unless their community made a profound difference in the world. (There is no statement of this theme by any contemporary Jewish theologian as clear and as resonant as Greenberg's essay, "The Universalism of the Chosen People.")

Greenberg and his contemporaries were influenced, to a far greater degree than anyone has ever seriously discussed, by Hasidism. Each of them was, in his own way, a *rebbe*. With the exception of Weizmann and, at the very end of his life, Greenberg, none of them ever occupied a high official position in the Zionist movement. What made all of these men into leaders was their personal attractiveness. Most of them wrote considerably, and Greenberg, who spent the bulk of his life editing the Yiddish and English periodicals of the Labor Zionist movement in America, wrote thousands of words a week for many years. Nevertheless, those who revered and loved him—I proudly confess that I was among them—learned what he had to teach by being in his company, by listening to his table talk, and, above all, simply by being in his presence. His very existence showed that it was possible to be at once a Jew, a socialist, and a Zionist.

The issue of the conflict between the "man" and the "Jew" is not new—it was not new to Moses Mendelssohn two centuries ago. It reappeared at the beginning of the 20th century among some younger Hebrew writers who felt within themselves a "rent in the heart" between their Jewish emotions and their desire to break out into a wider and freer world. Greenberg was a younger contemporary of these figures, but he was much better educated than any of them in the whole range of Western culture (right after the Bolshevik Revolution he was professor of both medieval Hebrew and classical Greek at the University of Kharkov). As a result, in his heart too there was much pain, but there was no rent.

This is why it is so regrettable that Greenberg's voice never became the influence it deserved to be. While his middle-aged audiences wanted him to tell them that all was for the best in their world of internal Zionist organizational politics, Greenberg wanted to talk to the then younger generation which was not there to hear him. Some of the children of that generation—which was so busy in Greenberg's time with passing competitive examinations to get jobs in the New Deal bureaucracy—are now disdainful of success. Searching for their own *rebbes*, they have turned to instructors like Paul Goodman and Herbert Marcuse, or, counterposing Buddhism to both their Western and Jewish identities, to such as Allen Ginsberg. An essay in the collection under review shows that Greenberg was far ahead of today's youth in assimi-

ARTHUR HERTZBERG *is the author of* The French Enlightenment and the Jews.

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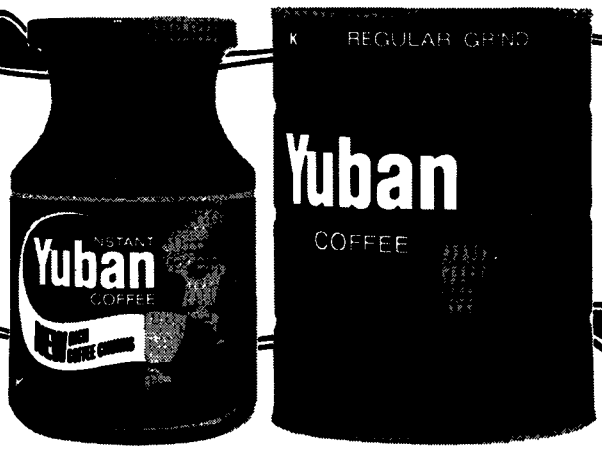

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lating Buddhist learning. However, Greenberg was also a humanist and a social-democrat, and "up against the wall" would have been as repugnant to him as Bolshevism itself. The experiences of the Russian Revolution implanted in him the unshakable conviction that no ideological vision justified the expenditure of an individual's life or human rights. In the 30's, in the days of the Popular Front, he turned away from blood and anger, even though it was presented as holy anger, and continued to insist that ideologies of the Left were no less capable of leading to murder than those of the Right.

DURING his lifetime Greenberg served as *rebbe* to a coterie, several members and disciples of which have seen to it from time to time that some of his essays be republished. The *Hayim Greenberg Anthology* is the third such volume to have appeared so far in English; it is graced by a very moving introduction by Marie Syrkin.

This latest effort to bring Greenberg's writings to a wider audience continues to have about it the atmosphere of an act of piety. I do not blame the translators and editors of the several collections of Greenberg's writings for not being able to break outside the bounds of their immediate circle. I am, however, deeply saddened by the thought that his work continues to be seemingly unknown. But perhaps it is right that this should be so. Greenberg is the kind of writer whose work needs to be encountered by personal choice. The best place to begin, in English, is this collection.

Marilyn

NORMA JEAN. By FRED LAWRENCE GUILES. *McGraw-Hill. 352 pp. $8.95*

Reviewed by MICHAEL WOOD

THE BIOGRAPHER'S familiar cry: the real thing, the onion's heart, the truth teased out from all the dirt and rumor and gossip. "There has been no attempt to repeat the legends. . . . There were *two* Marilyns: the actress and the woman, and the public and her film colleagues were always confusing the two." In fact, Fred Guiles's *Norma Jean* is overwhelming evidence against his own case: the onion, it turns out, has no heart. There was only one Marilyn. There was only the myth, and she and everyone else believed in it.

More precisely, there was the myth or there was nothing. She was Marilyn Monroe or she was no one, a faceless girl in a tight gown, dazed by vermouth and Nembutals. I'm thinking of myth in the anthropological sense: an attempt to make a single "story" out of a set of disparate facts. Myth in this reading is primitive and powerful rationalization, a form of scientific hypothesis in simpler communities, a form of scattered magic in ours. When the myth is invoked, its implied last line is always: and that is why things have to be the way they are.

The Marilyn myth is one of innocence. She doesn't understand, she's a child, she couldn't help it —whatever it was. From the dumb blonde who trotted into Groucho's office in *Love Happy* to the "bruised innocent" (Guiles's phrase) haunting *The Misfits*, her last completed film, she was never responsible, she carried a kind of purity through all the comedy and all the collapses. The pale voice whispers, the doll face disowns the splendid body, is almost psychotically impervious to all that sexuality below it. The wide eyes blink, squint in pleasure or in touching, transparent attempts at cunning. A loser. There is a scene in *Some Like It Hot* which is a kind of paradigm. Marilyn joins Jack Lemmon in a bunk bed. Her breasts swing over him, he sweats. But she's just being nice, sees nothing, because Jack Lemmon is disguised as a girl. Anything he could do would be a betrayal.

Marilyn is Clarissa, we are her half-willing, thwarted Lovelaces, and all her films turn into that story of innocence pursued by its seducer, not because she is typecast (although she is), but because Marilyn and the movies confer reality on each other. Her role in *The Misfits*, which is biographical —Arthur Miller's invitation to look in on his crazy, helpless, lovable wife (soured ironically by open hostility on the set and the complete breakdown of the marriage by the time the movie was shot)— is only a straight version of her role in *Some Like It Hot*, which was written as a standard comedy part: dumb broad as a victim of a string of handsome rats. She had an extraordinary capacity for gathering the world into her myth.

MARILYN believed it all, or pretended to. Her favorite picture of herself appears on the dust-jacket of Guiles's book: pale, poignant face, crossed hands clutching a rose. But the myth has several levels. At the simplest level, we were asking Marilyn to make sex innocent for us, and she obliged. Guiles compares her with Mae West. Mae West made sex funny, but Marilyn made it clean. From her early days as a calendar girl and leading attraction of magazines like *Yank*, *Laff*, *Peek*, and *See*, through all the movies, to the set of her last, unfinished film, where she shed her bathing suit and splashed in the nude, she was naive and unbothered about her body, or appeared so. She liked it, she was proud of it.

But if Marilyn became "the earth's adopted daughter," as Guiles says, it was not for nothing. "You're very girl-next-doorish," her first agent told her when she was eighteen. But she was the girl you *wanted* next door, not the freckled, bullying monster who really lived there. She was your flirtation with sex and guilt, the eternal temptress got up as a wholesome lass. Later, this image came to take on an overlay of insanity, thereby picking up another favorite fantasy of our time—the tragic, beautiful, mad thing, with a harassed Arthur Miller in the role of savior-companion. Breakfast at Tiffany's going on through lunch and supper.

A last level appears late in Marilyn's life—toward the end of her marriage to Miller. Her innocence becomes a kind of doom. Not only has she never done anything, now there is nothing she can do. Her life is completely out of control, delivered over to the

MICHAEL WOOD, *a new contributor, is an assistant professor of English at Columbia.*

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Federal funds sold	16,100,000
Loans	954,580,025
Direct lease financing	9,669,240
Bank premises and equipment	24,375,943
Customers' liability on acceptances	36,722,056
Other assets	18,822,034
Total Assets	$1,673,055,089
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Deposits:	
Demand deposits	$ 672,178,317
Savings and time deposits	708,263,900
	$1,380,442,217
Federal funds purchased and securities sold under agreement to repurchase	28,814,000
Borrowed funds	31,636,000
Mortgage notes payable	8,681,128
Acceptances outstanding	37,582,821
Unearned income	18,522,719
Accrued expenses and other liabilities	20,739,952
Total Liabilities	$1,526,418,837
RESERVE FOR POSSIBLE LOAN LOSSES	$ 28,064,406
CAPITAL:	
Capital notes and debentures	$ 26,180,000
Common stock ($5 par value)	24,995,835
Surplus	45,004,165
Undivided profits	22,391,846
	$ 92,391,846
Total Capital	$ 118,571,846
Total Liabilities, Reserves and Capital	$1,673,055,089

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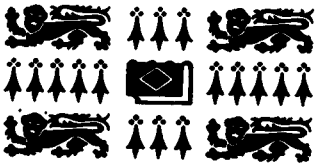
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demons, rattling down the single track to the cliff's edge. Marilyn's "tainted family genes," in Guiles's lugubrious phrase, have taken over. (Her mother, her mother's brother, and both her mother's parents were committed to mental hospitals.)

BUT THE central and most complex level of the myth lies between the doomed heroine and the girl who makes sex all right. It lies in the powerful suggestion, projected both in and alongside her movies, that Marilyn herself, throughout her life, was always and irrevocably innocent.

This is where Guiles fails us. His book is pleasant enough, decent, well-intentioned, well-researched. He has a doubtful taste for ringing melodrama ("And Jim Dougherty walked down the stairs and out of her life . . . . ") and his attempts to link Marilyn with history are often comic ("Time was running out for the Axis partners by early 1944 . . ."), but *Norma Jean* is a readable, gentle, intelligent book. It simply falls down on the crucial question: how innocent was Marilyn? How ruthless was she in digging for protectors and then ditching them? How much did she sleep around to get ahead? How much did it hurt to be close to her? Guiles goes discreet here. He speaks at one point of the "mask of innocence" which she assumed when she was in difficulties, and at another of "the Marilyn canon of deprivation and horror." But that's as far as he goes. Marilyn may have exaggerated, he implies, but she didn't lie.

But a myth *is* a lie. Total innocence for anyone over a year old has to be a fiction. And if it's hard to see why anyone would want it, it's even harder to see why anyone would wish it on someone else. Yet both things happened. Marilyn became a reverse scapegoat, the bearer of our lost innocence. And she wiped herself out (literally) because innocence in a woman of thirty-six is not a quality, but an absence of qualities, a blank.

Marilyn moved relentlessly through her life, discarding friends, lovers, hangers-on, apparently remembering nothing, almost never looking back. When she did look back, the abyss opened, and she got drunk fast. The result was a woman without a past. Having no past, she had no life: she was no one. She was a starlet, a star, a talented actress, a would-be mother, would be wife (two, maybe three miscarriages, three husbands), but these were all hypothetical states, sustained at the level of the image only, which Marilyn preferred to the prison of the fact. Her semi-accidental death in 1962 (too many nembutals) is the most moving and perfect moment of the myth: Marilyn disappears into her own absence.

NONE of this is really obscure But the hard question remains: what did we need her for? What was our part in the myth? Why did we adopt this luminous child (the image was used by two of her directors, Joshua Logan and Billy Wilder)? What did we want with this sexy cousin of the poor little rich girl? What was the nature of our guilt, that we needed such an excruciating innocence?

Tailoring the Dream

THE UNPERFECT SOCIETY: BEYOND THE NEW CLASS. By MILOVAN DJILAS. Translated by Dorian Cooke. *Harcourt, Brace & World. 267 pp. $5.00.*

Reviewed by DAVID T. BAZELON

"AS THE chapters that follow will illustrate, it is my belief that society cannot be perfect." Shall we laugh or cry? The latter, I assure you. This profound belief of Djilas was gained at an appalling cost, so it must be respected. He argues at some length in this strange new book of his (improperly said to be a sequel to *The New Class*) that neither Marxism nor his apostasy from it —his belief in unperfectness—is

DAVID T. BAZELON's Nothing But a Fine Tooth Comb, *a section of which appeared in our February issue, will be published in the fall by Simon & Schuster.*

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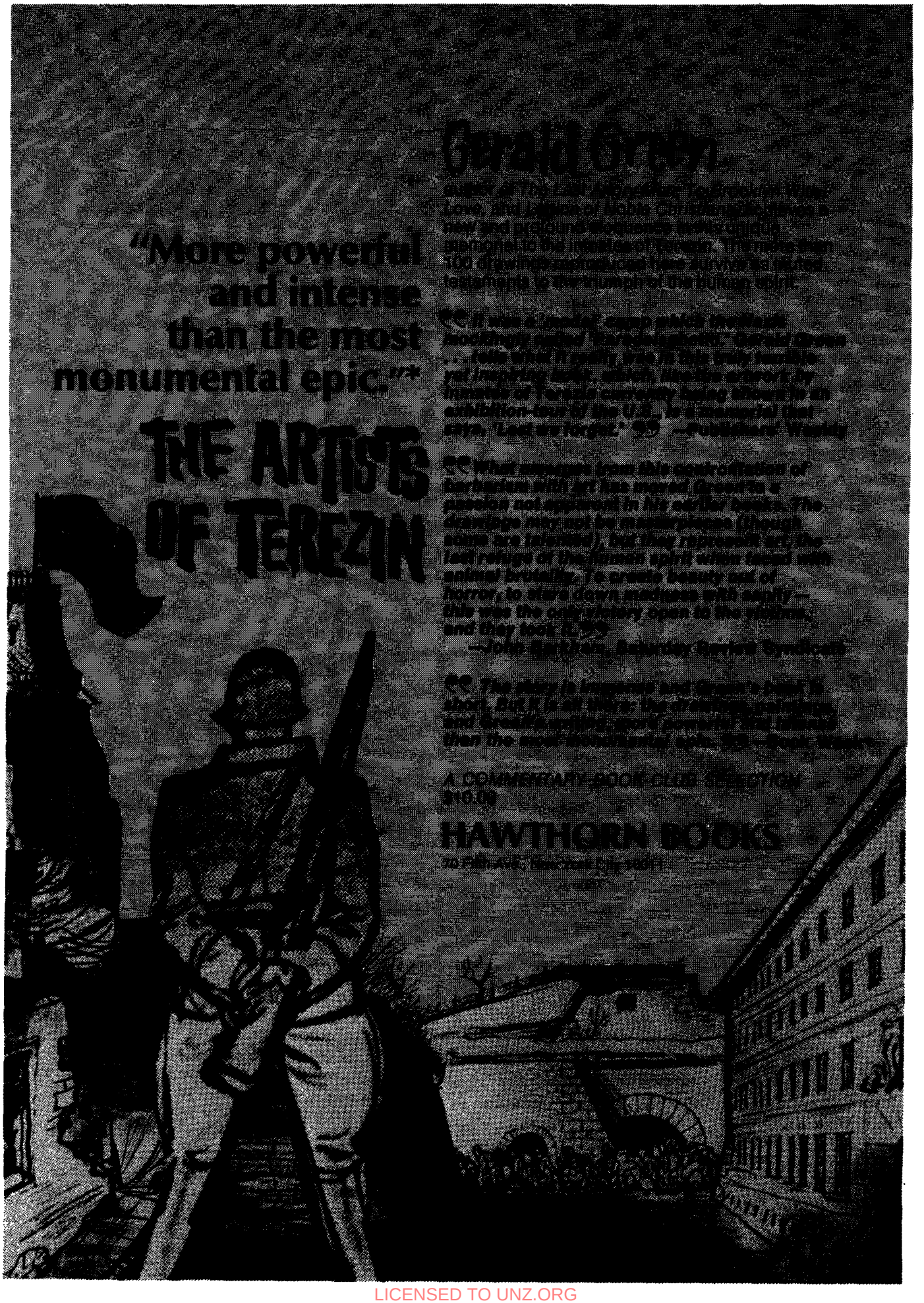
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religious in nature. I was not convinced. Grant the feasibility of the term "secular religion," and you will not be convinced either.

THE UNPERFECT SOCIETY (not published in Yugoslavia) should be read in the East—not especially in the United States. Here, we are eavesdropping. The force of Djilas's writing—and the grandiose effort involved in accomplishing it—are not readily apparent to those who have not felt the pull of Marxism in one or another of its various forms. The author was a revolutionary Marxist in his youth and a primary leader of a new Marxist state that his youthfulness helped to establish. He speaks only to those who can at least imagine both ideology/existences: the ideas of youth *and* the guns behind those ideas in middle age.

Djilas can readily be compared with Leon Trotsky: both were highly-placed revolutionary and state leaders; at the same time, each in essence remained a literary person; and both men ended up in grandiloquent isolation. Trotsky was of course the greater figure; but it can be said for Djilas, and not for the Russian, that his literary revolution against his achieved political revolution included a thorough attack on the dogma of the state he helped to establish. Trotsky's attack on his former comrades centered on their falling away from revolutionary truth; Djilas is limited by no such purism. Even so, I count the generational difference between the two men—and the character of the main enemy of each—as important causes. Moreover, Djilas was embarked upon his oppositional career mostly as a consequence of Tito's struggle with Stalin: he took the Yugoslavian party line and went too far with it—safely at first, since his persecution began only after Stalin's death (and clearly he expected a number of ranking leaders to follow him). Also, to Tito's credit, Djilas has not been killed, although a lesser man would have been destroyed by the state's effort against him. Still, Trotsky never said: "The world is satiated with dogmas, but people are hungry for life. . . ."

The largest (and dullest) portion of *The Unperfect Society* consists of the author carefully disengaging himself from Stalinist, Leninist, *and* Marxist dogma—especially including that great Key to History, dialectical materialism, which Trotsky defended to the end. Now this is certainly essential, courageous work in the East; but only of interest-with-effort here. I cannot imagine a man becoming an Individualist under Collectivism—certainly by the cultural road—without careful disengagement from state dogma. But in the United States, the dogmas from which we may properly be incited to disengagement are so poorly identified that some of our best minds must first create their elaboration in order to invite their destruction, while rasher minds ignore them in favor of more manageable imports, stylishly transgressing the American landscape in this-or-that sporty car. (In this sense, Djilas's critique of Lenin's theory of imperialism may even be U.S.-relevant.)

TO ME, the most appealing portion of this mixed-bag of a book is Djilas in his role of acute political analyst—based on his intimate acquaintance with the Communist order and excellent imagination of other political formations, existing and potential. His basic insight today is a simple exemplification of his own experience and, he believes, of Marxism itself—that myth-as-motivation can move history, but myth enacted by historically successful myth-makers puts a tyrannical stop to history-making. Surely, the grand problem of politics. Utilizing this framework (which has the immense analytical advantage of giving somewhat equal status, in the same argument, to the theoretical social structure *and* the observa-

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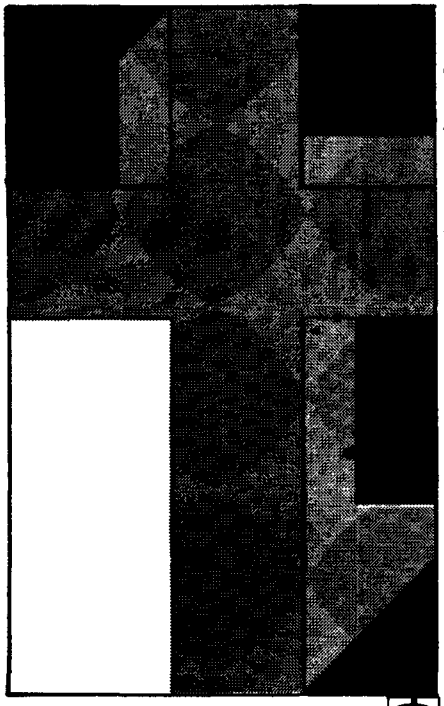

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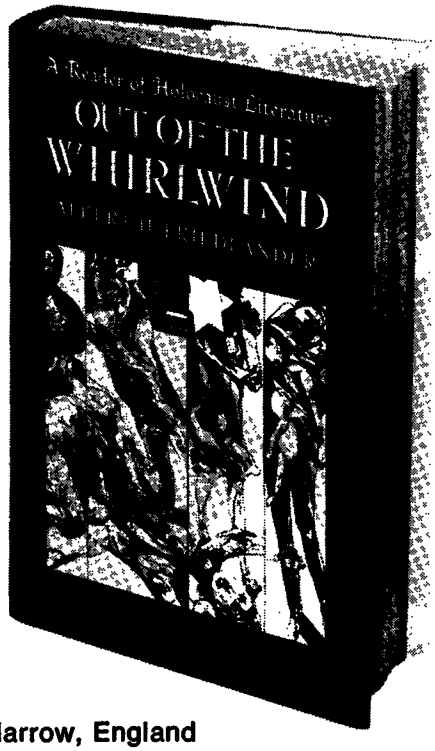

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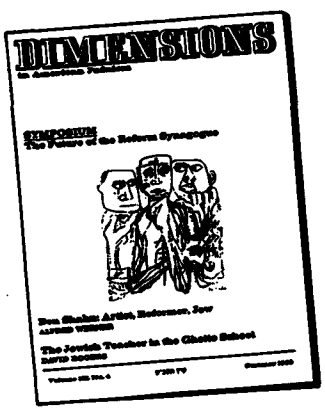

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ble purposes of human beings), he criticizes the enacted myth of Communism and finds, for instance, that as a theory of economic management it is adequate (barely) only for achieving primitive accumulation in a backward area. Finally, he says: "Under Communism the productive forces have come into conflict with the relationships of production; and if we substitute 'party' for 'capital,' then we can see before our eyes a vision of Communism's destiny, the one Marx had assigned to capitalism: 'Monopoly capital [party monopoly] becomes fetters on the mode of production which flourished with it and under it.'" So, the answer to what may fetter history at any moment or in any particular place is not afforded by the myth itself, not necessarily. The myth, enacted in an individual mind, may motivate that individual to destroy an existing state; but the same myth, enacted by the state, can destroy even that individual—certainly his motivation.

The point is a nearly impossible one: *to tailor the dream.* That is, if the dream is to persist. The alternative is to create a new myth to motivate the destruction of each new tyranny (historical obstruction)—understanding, of course, that the most recently successful myth also helped to create the current tyranny-to-be-destroyed. The latter mode suggests, to me, an excessive penchant for dreaming in the midst of the maelstrom of history. Since we cannot stop dreaming, I am for tailoring, which requires, first of all, some tailors—intellectual publicists not so slavishly devoted to their customers' dreams, whether official-state or official-revolutionary myths. Djilas concurs: "Thus history is in essence a group action performed by nations with their lives at stake, *and by thinkers who discover the inevitabilities,* and by leaders who display clear practicable ideas and organizational abilities." My emphasis: I like that phrase very much—as a formulation of what dream-tailoring means, and for the role-distinction between thinkers and leaders.

But what of the tailor, his personal dreams? The third (and unifying) aspect of *The Unperfect*

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Society is Djilas's own narrative expression of his fabulous fall from Communist power and grace. An example, one of many: "I was on my own. That was how it had to be. I had then, I have now, no complaints, no regrets, because I was forging my own destiny by myself. I saw no other way but this way through the wilderness, through the mire and undergrowth. The thought behind everything that I wrote at that time, everything that I had felt the need to demonstrate, with all my heart, in my own life, can be reduced to this: people, my country's sons, should not be humiliated and persecuted because of ideas, for expressing their thoughts." But *he* was persecuted, and has been ever since—and may be again, God forbid, for publishing this current book (or the next one). I feel queasy in saying it, but the quality of Djilas's writing about the *feelings* accompanying his acts of apostasy, and punishment therefor, are not equal to the story itself—or to his searing honesty in depicting the intellectual and factual considerations in his thoughts at the time. I imagine it is just too big a story for him to write about so soon, and not yet ended. He has written biography and fiction, however, as well as political comment, and this is reputed to be of a high order. In addition—whether or not written in jail on rolls of toilet paper, as some of his work—he has translated, for the first time into Serbo-Croatian, John Milton's *Paradise Lost.*

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Reviewed by
MARGERIE BONNER LOWRY

NOTES FROM THE CENTURY BEFORE is a document unlike any I have ever read, and it has

MARGERIE BONNER LOWRY *is presently at work editing the manuscript of* October Ferry to Gabriola, *a novel by her late husband, Malcolm Lowry.*

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left me with a feeling of the vast country to our north that we know so little about. The title is apt, for northern British Columbia must be very much like our own frontier a century ago, except for the paralyzing cold, and, of course, except for Alaska. Edward Hoagland explains that he went to this still wild and dangerous place to get first-hand accounts, before it was too late, from the few surviving old-timers who had explored the north country. He wanted it fresh and clear and not watered down or built into legends, and he found it and has recorded it for our pleasure.

The major part of the book is in the form of a daily journal which records conversations with the people Hoagland met and talked to, and the hazardous trips he made to find them. Some of the stories are gruesome but the tone is cheerful, even ebullient. I believe that *Notes from the Century Before* is essentially a man's book, but I can identify with it in a certain way because my husband and I lived in the country outside of Vancouver, British Columbia, off and on for nearly fifteen years.

I COULD scarcely believe what Mr. Hoagland says about the transformation of the wilderness he found underway if I hadn't seen the same thing happen almost overnight in our own little town of Dollarton. Where once had been the beautiful forest and the wild creatures and the birds, all is now gone, the forest chopped down to make way for real estate developments and industry.

Malcolm and I did no exploring in Hoagland's north country but we did visit places within easy reach like Sechelt, Nanaimo, and Vancouver Island, and much of even that was rather primitive in the early days of the war. We often saw the small brown bears in the forest; and walking back from Deep Cove on a moonlit night we sometimes even saw them trotting down the road. The deer swam across the bay in spring and rushed through the forest—I've often seen two or three does followed by a stag running full out through the woods. The water abounded in seals who used to

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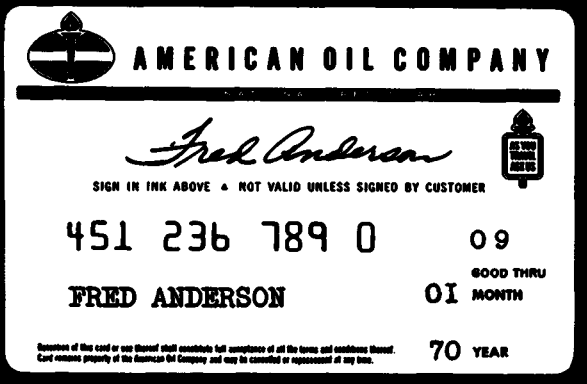

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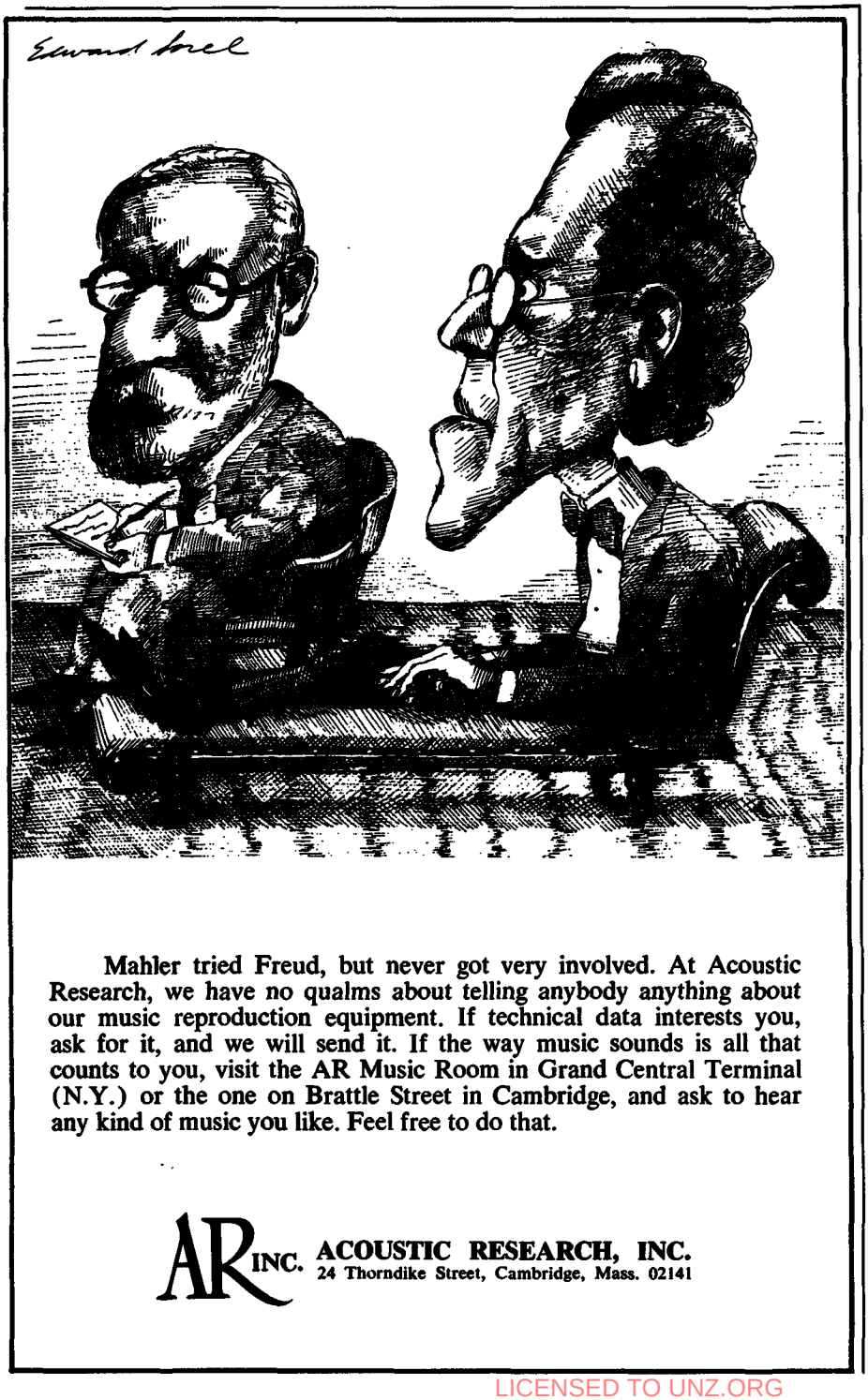
come up beside our little boat and stare at us curiously, then maybe follow the boat for a distance. Once we found a baby seal whose mother had probably been killed for it was lying tiny and helpless on the shore. We kept it in the bathtub and fed it milk and then fish and took it out daily for swims. My husband was a remarkable swimmer and he and the seal would frolic about gaily; one day the seal decided he was old enough to be free and he swam away so swiftly that even Malcolm could not catch him, to Malcolm's great chagrin. We would often see killer whales in the inlet also; once a school of them surfaced right beside our rowboat and I was terrified, but Malcolm was interested and he dallied while I howled "Row! Row for shore!" One winter when it had been unusually cold and snowy a puma came down in search of food into our forest by the sea. We saw it slinking through the woods at dusk once or twice a little distance away, and then it killed and ate some pets, among them our favorite cat. We searched for her in the forest with not so much as a club: I often wondered what we'd have done if we had met the big cat face to face.

On stormy nights in winter we sat around the stove drinking tea and listening to the stories, very much like Hoagland's, told us by our friends the fishermen. These brave men lived in our town all winter; in the spring we'd help them paint their boats, and then one by one, and all alone, they would set off for the northern waters. We always watched for them anxiously when it was time for them to return in the fall, and always they returned with tales to tell us. The fishermen were all old and are all dead now but I shall never forget them.

HOAGLAND started off from a place called Wrangell. I cannot discover from the map its exact location (the end-paper maps in the book are quite poor, and I had great difficulty following them), but it is certainly several hundred miles north of Vancouver, on the mouth of the Stikine River. In Wrangell Hoagland interviewed old men who had seen the country at its wildest. Their hundreds of brief stories of bravery and death, each one of which could be expanded into a saga of heroism, are scattered throughout the book. Hoagland also tells of farmers in nearby sheltered valleys. They raise vegetables, can them for the winter, salt down fish and meat. It is subsistence farming, for there is no market, but still they keep on clearing land and planting more vegetables every year until they die. A hundred miles or so north and east of Wrangell is Telegraph Creek, a tiny settlement of 170 people, which Hoagland and his party reached with difficulty in a small boat. Hoagland traveled on beyond Telegraph Creek, but he kept coming back to it to talk to the old-timers there.

In his loosely casual diary style Hoagland gives us the sense and feeling of having been in this country with its mighty mountain chains, tremendous rivers, and



Mahler tried Freud, but never got very involved. At Acoustic Research, we have no qualms about telling anybody anything about our music reproduction equipment. If technical data interests you, ask for it, and we will send it. If the way music sounds is all that counts to you, visit the AR Music Room in Grand Central Terminal (N.Y.) or the one on Brattle Street in Cambridge, and ask to hear any kind of music you like. Feel free to do that.

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hidden lakes. One of the finest passages in the book is the description of the Spatzizi River at its source: a young, wild river where you really feel the arctic though it's midsummer and 80 degrees. Traveling the land by boat, helicopter, seaplane, and by foot, Hoagland got to know the vast distances and the terrifying loneliness of this incredible country.

He picked up some interesting lore about grizzlies, one example of which we ourselves had heard from our fishermen friends: if a grizzly attacks you, you can stop him by lighting anything handy, a mitten perhaps, and throwing it in his face. And there are some interesting facts about wolves, who turn out to be quite different from what I had thought them. They have highly varied personalities, and are great runners, going a hundred fifty miles in one direction and then a hundred fifty miles back. But they cannot be broken to a dog sled because when the whip is used they simply lie down and die.

THE INDIANS in this country are very friendly and still live by hunting and trapping. Hoagland reports at length of the hunting parties that go after moose, grizzlies, and so on. But hunting for sport is changing too. They fly hunters in by helicopter now, and then travel inland with them by jeep, and the guide fires simultaneously with his man so he can't miss having a trophy to take back.

At the time Hoagland was there work was beginning on the Alaska Highway, and he reports that the Indians and frontiersmen were not too impressed: "Well, if some kid gets a broken leg it's quicker to get him to a doctor." The idea of jobs or electricity hadn't entered their heads. Hoagland says that now this country is already "booming," the helicopter having opened it up for logging, road building, damming of the great rivers, and flooding of valleys. It had to be, of all people, a New Yorker who preserved for us what it was like before.

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(Rover speaks out on . . .)

ERGONOMETRY

"The human body," remarked Dick Tracy some time back while hurtling around the moon in one of those standup go-cans, "can accommodate to almost any condition."

WELL, yes; but surely any go-can manufacturer worthy of the name would have provided Officer Tracy something to sit on, thus meeting the human body half-way in the accommodation game.

This latter idea, that machines should do their fair share of the adapting, is what is known in the English technical design trades (where they take such things very seriously indeed) as Ergonometry. There's even a journal about it.

The truly ergonometric machine comes closer than half-way to suiting the people who will use it, of course, and the example that comes most readily to mind is—are you ready?—our own Rover 2000 Sports Sedan, which we designed from the people out just a few short years ago. In order to get an idea of the results, since time is short and we've already mentioned the subject of seats...

Sit down. Lean back.

Straighten up. (Fig. 1)

Thank you. Now you probably managed all of that no-hands. Wonderful thing your back, but the point is that the backs of most car seats are not; in fact just getting them *ready* to lean back on or sit up a little straighter in often takes both hands, twisting motions, even getting out of the car altogether.

Now try the Rover 2000's (Fig. 2). Briefly, pulling the handle (a) upwards frees the back (b), which, having a torsion bar, acts like a rocking chair. Pushing the handle downwards again locks it, in whatever position you've rocked to.

Not quite so versatile and easy to use as your own back, perhaps, but for leaning and sitting up you'd have to admit that it is very similar. And you would notice one other similarity—between the shape of the seat and yourself—the result of our consulting with orthopedic specialists in its design.

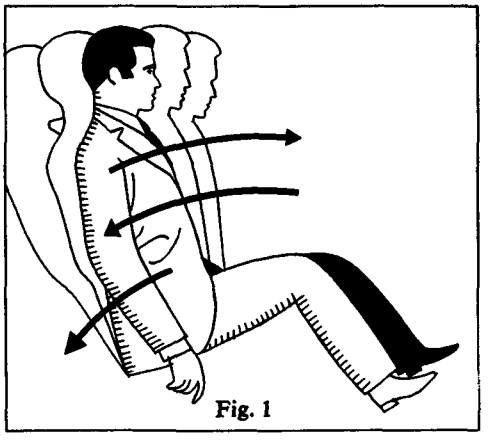

Fig. 1

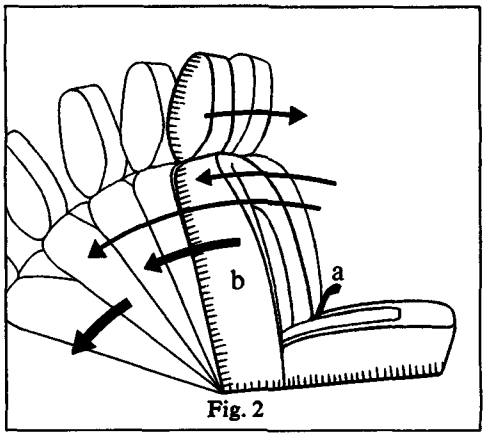

Fig. 2

Human (Fig. 1) vs. Rover 2000 Seat (Fig. 2) Back Action.

(Ergonometry doesn't stop there. It concerns *all* of you, right down to your fingernails. But rather than keep you from the other ads in this magazine we will close now with this offer: A brochure on the Rover 2000, both Twin Carburetor and Automatic models, comprising many pages and with colored pictures. See coupon. Thank you.)

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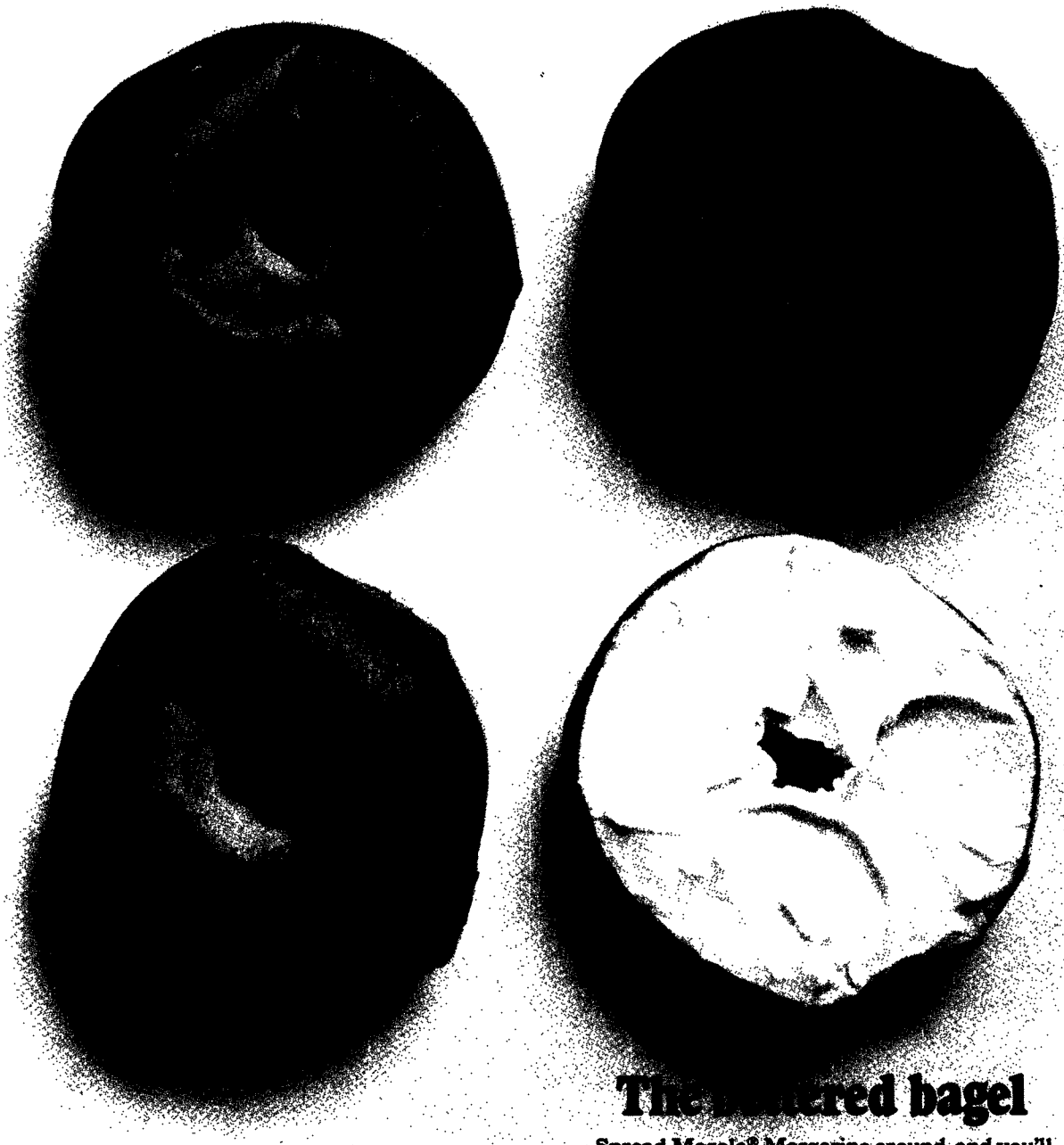

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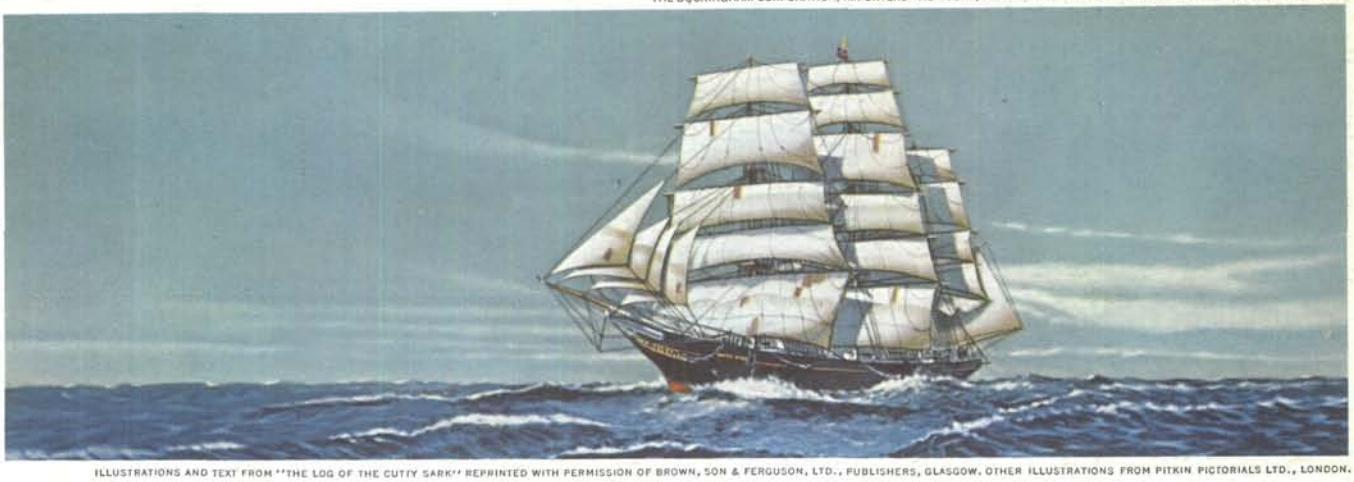

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Tony Robson, far right, one of the most storied characters of the clipper era. He was Chinese. As a baby, he'd been discovered in the South China Sea, alone, in a small, rotting boat. He spent his life at sea... and picked up a broad Scots accent from the crews with which he served. Like many of the crewmen aboard CUTTY, he was such a superb seaman, he could have commanded any clipper.

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